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the **ARMENIAN** *Review*

**EIGHT
DAYS
IN A
CHEKIST
PRISON**

**POETRY
SHORT STORIES
ARTICLES OF
LASTING INTERESTS**

**VOL. XII, NO. 3. — 47
AUTUMN, OCTOBER, 1959**

THE ARMENIAN REVIEW

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• *The* ARMENIAN
REVIEW •

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the ARMENIAN *Review*

TWELVE
VOLUME ELEVEN, NUMBER 3-47

AUTUMN, OCTOBER, 1959

- THE FEBRUARY 18, 1921 ARMENIAN REVOLT:

EIGHT DAYS IN A CHEKIST PRISON

HOVHANNES KADJAZNOUNI

(First Prime Minister of the Armenian Republic)



Hovhannes Kadjaznoui was the first Prime Minister of the Independent Republic of Armenia in 1918. When in the winter of 1920 the Republic fell and the Soviets took over, despite Bolshevik promises that political foes would not be persecuted, one of the first acts of the new government was to arrest, imprison and exile all members of the former government, the entire army staff of officers and all prominent political leaders and intellectuals. Hovhannes Kadjaznoui, the former Prime Minister, was one of the arrested men.

Exactly two and a half months later, there was a popular revolt in Armenia which overthrew the Soviet government. The story of the revolt has been told by eye witnesses and actors in the drama, such as Martiros of Bashkiarni, Karo Sassouni, E. Sarkissian and others. Enemies of the Independent Republic have tried to discredit the authenticity of this elemental uprising against the Soviet abuses by ascribing the movement to Dashnak conspiracy.

Hochannes Kadjaznouni's present account of the story of his imprisonment, written in the summer of 1921 in the City of Teheran, is one more first hand account in confirmation of the fact that the February uprising of 1921 was an spontaneous and irresistible outburst of popular indignation against Bolshevik perfidy.—EDITORS.

Curiously enough only one day before I was quietly seated in my home, waiting for the Cheka to come and arrest me. I made no effort to escape. But today I was vacillating, whether or not I should give myself up. I was sensible of a fine difference which was difficult to define; yesterday I made no effort to escape; today I was willingly going to the prison, and perhaps to my death.

I was passing through dark, desolate streets, thinking to myself. "Just now I still am free, I still can avoid the jail, and even perhaps the executioner's bullet. But if I return home it will be a dead end for me. Should I go, or not? I still am master of the situation, no one has laid a hand on me as yet, the streets are open before me. But once I plant my foot inside my home I am in the grip of the Cheka. Should I go, or not?"

One question in particular tormented my mind. Why had they gone to my brother's home to look for me? The Cheka knew well my address. Its agents already had called on me. Why didn't they come directly to my home instead of wasting time at my brother's, so much so that Siroon had had time enough to run out and warn me?

Could it be that they were doing it deliberately to enable me to go into hiding or to run away? Why did they leave me alone for wholly two days to do as I pleased?

Could it be that Armenian who was so insistent that I go into hiding, had been inspired by the Bolsheviks with whom he held old social and friendly ties?

I already had come out into the square

of the Russian church. Here my road was parted. If I wanted to run away I had to turn to the right, toward the bazaar where one of my friends had prepared a hiding place for me and long since had been pleading with me to take advantage of it. If I wanted to return home I had to turn to the left.

Without hesitation I turned to the left.

There were two armed men standing at the top of the front steps of my home.

"Where are you going?" one of them asked me in Russian, blocking my path.

"My home," I said.

The other man who undoubtedly was an Armenian whispered something into the Russian's ear and I was allowed to pass. As I was passing I heard the Russian say to his companion in a low voice,

"What? This old man?"

In the living room I saw two other youths, both Armenians. The face of one, apparently the older of the two, seemed familiar to me but I could not exactly place him. Here were, too, my brother and my daughter.

"You have come to arrest me?" I asked.

"Yes."

"Have you a written warrant?"

The familiar face drew from his pocket a written injunction. It was from the Cheka, signed by Amirian, the president, and sealed with the government signet. Everything was in order.

"Very well," I said, returning the paper.

"May I pick up a blanket and a pillow?"

"Anything you want, except money and precious articles."

My bundle was ready from the day be-

fore. In two minutes I was ready.

"Let's go," I said.

"But we must first search the house," the older man said with hesitation.

"Please, go ahead and search."

"What kind of papers are these?" he asked, pointing to a set of papers.

"Look and see," I said.

They were old papers from Europe. He thumbed them and set aside a few, picked them up, yet he could not understand because they were largely in French and English.

"I guess there's nothing else to look for," he said.

"I wouldn't know," I said.

The youth was obviously reluctant with his job, he seemed ashamed. He shunned my eye, was very polite, and strictly avoided impolite words or manners.

"Is this trunk yours?"

"It is mine."

"I guess there's nothing important in it."

"Your comrades already have searched that trunk twice," I said. "I, too, ransacked it thoroughly the other day, because I knew you were coming."

"In that case there's no need of searching it again. Let's go."

I bade my daughter and brother goodby, picked up my bundle and we went out. The hour was nearly 8, the streets were deserted and silent. We passed by two or three late home-goers on the way who hurried by me with downcast eyes. I recognized one of them, Yervand K...ian, and I thought to myself, "I wonder what this man is feeling now, the man who was so enthused over our independent government and now was seeing his Prime Minister being led to the Cheka building."

At the Cheka building they first took us to the office of the commander. It was a spacious hall, very dirty and filled with men, incessantly coming in and going out, asking questions, giving orders and bristl-

ing. Standing before a telephone instrument and shouting in a throaty voice was a short man, with a thick mop of hair and clean-shaven, a gray military coat flung over his shoulders, a mauser revolver in his side. Was he the chief of the Cheka or his deputy? I could not definitely tell.

The commander seemed very angry. He was roaring in the telephone receiver, as if wanting to burst it. Exquisite, three-storied Russian oaths with powerful accents, rising above the din of the conversations. The chief was bellowing at the central telephone operator who had failed to make a connection.

He clamped down the receiver, then turned around and saw me.

"What in hell do you want?" he shouted at me, transfixing me with his bloodshot eyes.

"I want nothing," I said.

"What nonsense? What business have you got here? I am asking you."

"I am waiting for your orders."

The youth who had escorted me drew near and whispered something in his ear and the commander's face was instantly transfigured.

"O ho, why didn't you say so? I am very glad, very glad, please, take a seat. You are my guest."

He was drunk, the stench of the *Raki*, reeking from his mouth. He was speaking in Russian with the crude accents and the customary errors of the Armenian who does not know Russian well. He was wringing his hands with a special satisfaction as if really rejoicing over something, I knew not what.

"Please, be seated, be seated. O, be comfortable, we will not keep you here long, we will not keep you long."

He kept grinning and grimacing.

"I am not uncomfortable," I said.

"Yes, yes, why should you? Ah yes, where's my pen?" Then he bellowed,

"What son of a bitch has picked up my pen? My pen, I say, you bastards, you sons of dogs."

"I have your pen," a quiet voice spoke from a corner in Russian. "Why are you shouting? I did not eat up your pen."

The commander instantly quieted down, pulled a questionnaire from his desk drawer, and like a school pupil, started to put down my answers with clumsy large letters.

He often interrupted his interrogation to converse with me. "You have been in Baku, I know," he said in a friendly tone. "Why not? I too am from Baku, but I have never had the honor of meeting you, I have never had the honor. Of course, of course. How could I? We are proletarians."

He again turned around and roared, striking his fist against his chest. "Yes, I am a proletarian, do you see my hands? I have worked with these hands, with my blood and sweat. I am a workingman."

"Don't shout," the Russian's quiet voice again warned.

The commander turned to his task.

"Have you been in America?"

"Yes, I have."

"I know, I know, I know every thing. Did you eat well, drink well in America?"

I kept my silence. I did not answer him.

"Of course you ate well, and drank well. The bourgeoisie eat well and drink well. The . . . bastards."

"I guess you are through with my interrogation," I interrupted.

"I am through, I am through, take it easy."

"Where shall I go now?"

"Right away, right away." He again shouted savagely. "Comrade Vasily, ah yes, you are here. Escort this gentleman the Minister. He is the Mr. Minister, do you hear? The Mr. Minister."

A Prisoner in Jail

It seemed as if they had taken me to the

home of *Dashnaktzoutyoun*. The inmates of the prison, the veterans and the youth were all my old friends and half-acquaintances. Here, too, were the ring leaders of the Armenian Popular Party, our poor "Bourgeoisie"!

My appearance was greeted with vigorous applause and exclamations. It seemed they had come to a wedding and I was a late comer whom they waited with great impatience in order to begin the feast.

As a matter of fact, I myself was in a festive mood. My fate at last had been decided, I was in prison now, free from the cares of the outside world. There was nothing I could do now. This was the salvation of the tired man, a sort of privileged status which those who have never seen the inside of a jail have difficulty in understanding.

They instantly made room for me to be seated. Nor was that an easy thing to do. The three little rooms were so filled with men that there was not a spot to set a foot on. All the same, they squeezed up a little, crowded a little, and opened a little space on the dry, drab floor. I put down my bundle and sat on it.

Then began the long endless questioning. I told them about the outside and they told me about the inside, as if we had not seen one another for a whole year. That night I never closed my eyes.

We were crouched there on the floor, tightly pressed one against another so that no one could move a finger. As long as my immediate neighbors were awake, the situation was tolerable, each man remained immobile, avoiding discomforting the other. But once sleep set in, all caution was given to the winds. Sleeping men instinctively tried to change their position to remove their shackles, to stretch and move more freely, to be more comfortable. That night I scarcely slept two hours.

The morning of February 13th—it was

Sunday as far as I recall—we celebrated mass, tightly squeezed in our positions, of course. The celebrant was Nicol Aghbalian, while Father Khachvankian played the role of deacon. The rest of us constituted the choir or mere worshippers. Nicol celebrated the mass with great vigor, distinction and grace, from start to finish. His enunciation was so clear and his emphasis so meaningful and touching that it seemed as if we were for the first time hearing and comprehending the depth and the beauty of the words.

The next day, February 14, was my birthday. I was now 53. Having been decided to celebrate the event a committee was elected to develop a program of speeches, music and story telling, capped by a banquet. The women's auxiliary promised to send us flowers and confectioneries.

The chairman of the committee was Steopa Navassardian—the commander, or general (governor) of the adjoining room. The governor of our room was company commander Shavarsh. Steopa contributed greatly to the upkeep of the spirits in the prison with his gay and lively disposition, his songs and his noisy laughter. Shavarsh was the specialist of story telling, especially popular anecdotes which are related in male company only, and that with extreme caution.

The feast in my honor was unfinished since the greater part of the prisoners were moved from the Cheka building to the central prison of Erivan where the first crop of the prisoners—Dr. Ohandjanian, Artashes Tchilingarian (Reuben Darbinian), Avetis Sahakian, Hamazasp Servantzian and many others were being held.

Suddenly our room was almost vacated, leaving behind scarcely 25-30 men. It was like pouring cold water on us. We tried to continue the songs and the jokes but to no avail. We could not understand why

they separated us. We tried to speculate, one more pessimistic than the other, always avoiding to tell what was in our minds. The fact was, we were now in the minority and this isolation, this separation was very depressing to us. Deprived of the presence of numbers, we felt even weaker and more helpless.

My Conversation with a Guard

February 15 was an anxious day for us. Vague whispers were filtering in from the outside pertaining to strange doings having to do with a revolt and fightings. We knew nothing for sure yet we instinctively felt we were living in the wake of momentous events.

Where did they come from? Who was bringing these news?

They were none other than our guards who in large part were plain Armenian peasants. The Bolsheviks had set them to work, had supplied them rifles and had set them as guards over us. Still, they had not been able to establish a single moral tie with them.

The soldiers could not understand why they were standing guard over us, whom they were watching, whom they were serving and why? They were afraid of the Bolsheviks and did their bidding. That was all.

I had a short conversation with one of the guards. I wanted to go to the toilet room, for my turn. The guard was a tall, aged peasant in moccasins and a tall fur-cap on his head. The only thing which gave him the appearance of a soldier was his patched up military coat and his bayoneted rifle.

"Have you a good supply of cartridges?" I asked him.

"What business of yours it is?" he replied.

"So that I will know how many shots you will fire in my back if I should try to escape."

The man flashed an uneasy look around

him, turned his face around as if he was not speaking to me, then he said in a low voice:

"Who is going to fire on you? Take your chance and run away."

He added immediately: "There are Russians standing guard at the gate. Watch out for them, they will fire."

He thought I really wanted to run away and was worried, lest the Russians fired at me.

"In that case, why are you standing here?" I chuckled.

"Me standing guard?" he said bitterly. "God damn the men who made me stand guard."

It made me recall a similar conversation that I had had with a Russian soldier ten years before. They were escorting me from the prison of Payilov to the headquarters of the Gendarmerie for questioning. I was in a carriage, one soldier sitting beside me, two others opposite me. It was a long trip and we picked up a conversation.

"Where are you taking me?" I asked, "I haven't done anything to you, I haven't hurt you. Why do you side with the police who are your enemies as well as mine?"

"You are right, Sir," he said. "Don't think we don't understand. We know that you are a good man, neither a thief nor a bandit, you are being punished for our sake. Don't you think we know it?"

"If you do, why are you holding me? Let me out of here and I'll go my way."

"Don't you do it," the soldier warned with alarm. "Don't you dare do it or I'll fire. My God, they demand it of me. How can I . . . ? Don't do it."

That day I was in a Tsarist prison as a revolutionary; today in a Bolshevik jail as a counter-revolutionary. That day it was the terrified Russian Mouzhik who was standing guard over me; today, the terrified peasant.

Stirrings in the Air

On February 16 they brought in a large number of new prisoners from the provinces, all unknown to me. The prison rooms again were crowded, especially since one of the three rooms was consigned to Russian soldiers. The new comers had brought news—vague, disconnected, contradictory, but nonetheless highly exciting news. They said the provinces were restless and a revolt already had started in certain places. The peasants of Bashgiarni, Akhtay and Arakatz regions had risen in arms and were attacking the Bolsheviks. In the city, armed bands were waiting for their orders to attack the central prison at any time.

We listened to all this, asked for details and made them repeat their tale. We could not believe it, and yet we could see with our own eyes that something unusual was going on around us, in the very lair of the Cheka. The guards had been multiplied and the vigilance intensified. The quartering of the Russian soldiers in our adjoining room could mean nothing but to fortify the Cheka from the inside.

Bringing in lunch from the outside was now forbidden. When we stepped out into the courtyard, we could see our wives, sisters and daughters huddled in the snow and the cold of the street, holding in their hands their lunch baskets, sad and despondent. They waited there for long hours to no avail. We were tense, uneasy and highly excited.

The night of the 16th-17th we heard rifle shots, yet we could not determine the direction they came from. At first dull and desultory, but steadily mounting, then sputtering. The firing lasted for a full hour and perhaps a little more, at least that's the way it seemed to us. From the disconnected conversations of the morning guards we learned that there had been a commotion in the central prison in the night and many prisoners had been massacred.

The guards seemed very afraid, they would not talk, probably because they knew nothing definitely. The officers were sullen, shouting and threatening the prisoners and the guards needlessly. At noon came the captain of the guards, an Armenian youth with an agreeable face and polite manners. He had to check on our names and numbers and make a list in Russian. I saw that he was having difficulty in writing. I picked up the paper and the pen and made a list of us all. There were exactly 75 of us. We asked the captain if we would be permitted to receive lunch from our relatives—we had gone without food since the day before. He said there would be none since all communication with the outside was closed. He would not tell us why.

The rumors about the massacre in the central prison continued to spread. They related monstrous happenings. They said half of the prisoners—a few hundred men had been massacred within a few hours. They had been done to death in their very cells. They had opened fire from the prison windows and had made a shambles of the place. Many had been killed with poleaxes. We could not believe what we heard and yet we were tense and uneasy.

In the evening we had new cause for uneasiness. Our lights did not go on, and yet we could see from our windows that the Cheka building was illuminated while we were in the dark. The guards refused to give us light, they even refused to let electricians among us look into the matter.

In the midst of these conversations one of the guards near us whispered in my ear: "Don't bother about fixing the wiring. I saw them cut off the wiring with my own eyes." It was obvious they had deliberately left us in the dark. Certainly something would happen to us that night.

Moments Later

My place was immediately below the window, on top of a table, the only piece of furniture in the room. On the 14th of the month when we had more room, my companions did me a special honor by giving me the whole of the table. And now they were asking me, even demanding, that I come down from the table and lie underneath it. Should they fire this night through the window, they said, you will be the first to get killed.

I made fun of their fears. "Nonsense," I said, "nothing will happen. Sleep easy and I will not come down from my table. If I am to die, it is better that I fall by the first bullet rather than the last."

I hung to my place. The darkness was so oppressive that we could not carry on a conversation. A word or two, no response, then silence. To dissipate our fears I started to relate the story of "Mameh-Zineh," or was it "David of Sassoun"? I do not recall very well. I was trying to make the story interesting, preserving the beauties of the folklore, the psychological authenticity, the vigor of creative imagination, the freshness of the images and the clarity of the diction. Still, I felt that I could not hold their interest. My audience was silent but inattentive. Every man was engrossed in his fears. When someone lit a cigaret, I could see how worried and fearful they were.

I finished my tale. There were a few sporadic comments, then there was silence again. I stretched myself on my table, pulled my blanket over me and fell asleep.

In my sleep I heard my name repeated several times. I raised my head and saw a stranger standing at the entrance of the room, holding a lit candle in his hand. The man could not step inside because there was not an inch of space to stand on. He held his candle high, shaded his eyes with the other hand and tried to locate me in the dark.

"You are Mr. Kadjznouni?" he asked in a restrained voice, as if trying not to wake up the sleeping.

"I am Kadjznouni," I said.

"What is your profession?"

"I am an engineer."

"An engineer?" he asked surprised.

"Yes, a civil engineer."

He hesitated a moment, as if trying to say something but knew not how.

"Haven't you been a minister of the cabinet?"

"I have."

The man was angry. "But you said you are an engineer?"

"You wanted to know my profession. Being a minister is not a profession."

"So you were the one who was prime minister in the *Dashnak* regime."

"Yes, I am the man."

"Very well, that will be all."

And he was off candle and all. There were uneasy whisperings in the room, each man talking to his neighbor, no one raised his voice. I again stretched myself on the table and fell asleep.

I don't know how long I had slept when I again heard the voice calling me. It was the same stranger candle in hand, this time accompanied by the captain of the guards.

"Comrade Kadjznouni," he called in a low voice.

"Here," I said.

"Hurry," he said simply.

Under the candle's dim light, half asleep half awake, trampling over bodies and apologizing, I staggered out of the room. There was a strong guard in front of the door, a circumstance which I instantly noted, for ordinarily two soldiers guarded the door. I looked up at the captain but he avoided my look. "This looks bad," I said to myself. "They are taking me for a ride."

There was a narrow corridor we had to pass through, scarcely 25 to 30 paces long,

so tightly guarded as if I was going to escape. But where could I escape? We were in the Cheka building, all the doors locked and the building filled with soldiers.

They took me to a cell, locked the door behind me and left me alone. The electric light was on here. It was an empty cold room with a dirty floor and threadbare window shades. It had two windows, with both shutters tightly closed. I approached one of the windows and cautiously opened the shutter. The story immediately below was on a street level. Opposite me I saw the home of Avedis Sahakian which proved that I was on Tarkhanian Street. Both windows were guarded by iron gratings. Two guards were pacing back and forth in front of the windows.

There was no possibility of escape but escape was farthest from my thoughts. Where could I escape and how? I was taking in the situation out of sheer curiosity.

I heard the sound of footsteps in the aisle, instantly closed the shutter and stood in the center of the room. The door slowly opened and in came two men. One was Mgrdich Mousinian, the other . . . ian. Ten minutes later they brought in a couple of prisoners, another and another couple. There were nine of us the "chosen," Mousinian, Dr. O. D. M. . . . ian, school teacher A . . . ian, the poet's cousin, a chauffeur whom I knew before but could not recall his name, and two youths who were total strangers to me. I knew that one of them had been arrested as a Mauserist, I learned the identity of the other later.

I asked myself why, out of 75, they had chosen us nine to stand in line. Personally, the Bolsheviks could hardly entertain feelings of hatred or revenge. I had had occasion to learn that their leaders even respected me to a small degree. I was a Dashnak of course, but as an exception, I was not a bandit. The only thing which

could have brought me here was the fact that, first, I was a "counter-revolutionary," and second, my official character, in the beginning a prime minister, and later, a member of the Parliament.

As to the crimes of my companions, I knew or could guess, yet it is irrelevant to tell it here. At all events, it was a strange selection and largely accidental. It seemed incongruous to hold together Mousinian and the chauffeur, a poor school teacher and the army officer A. Sahakian.

Revolt Breaks Out

"Do you see?" the Doctor said in a terrified voice, "I told you. Are you convinced now? That bloodthirsty dog is the relative of Otarbekov," referring to a member of the Cheka. We could not understand just why we should be afraid of this Otarbekov's distant relative. We were too absorbed with the goings on outside.

Presently men were prowling the streets furtively, running from corner to corner. Here and there windows would open. We saw the frightened faces of women folk, peeping out then retreating inside, shutting the windows. The firing was spreading in the city, we could distinctly hear the rackety-rack rack of the machine guns from various spots. The cannon kept thundering.

What was going on in the city? We no longer left our windows. The soldiers they had brought in half an hour before did not appear on the streets—perhaps they had crossed the Karjikian Street—the Cheka building was a square structure. There were only a few guards left behind and these could see us clinging to the windows yet said nothing. Were they really on our side or had they lost their heads? I do not know.

Once again a few men appeared in the opposite corner, but when warned by the guards, they disappeared. A little while

later they again appeared and again disappeared. My attention was attracted by a little girl, scarcely 13-14, beckoning us from the distance. Suddenly she leaped from the sidewalk, like a bullet rushed toward us, pushed aside a guard who would block her, and pressing her face to the glass of our window, screamed: "Wait a little longer, our men are coming."

She said it and instantly was off. And as if in confirmation of the words of this daring little girl, at that very moment we heard a dull, yet mighty roar which could be none other than the angry cry of a mad, rebellious mob. There could no longer be any doubt. The revolt was on. This was war. That which I had foreseen long before and feared so much was already an accomplished fact. The people had taken up arms.

There was a mortal fear in my heart. The Bolsheviks had an organized force—the red army—high command, arms and ammunition, tanks and all kinds of technical weapons. But our side, What did they have? They had nothing. All the same, the firing—it was our side—was getting closer and closer and more intensified, the formidable voice of the angry crowd could be heard more distinctly, and more menacing. Our men were coming.

Deliverance

Suddenly we heard the dry sputter of a machine gun, as if it had something urgent to say, emptying its monosyllables in rapid succession. It was the Bolsheviks' machine gun which they had planted at the bend of Abovian Street to defend the Cheka. The fire of the machine gun was retaliated by the guns and the revolvers of our men—irregular, confused, but savage and steadily mounting.

Our excitement had now reached its highest peak. We were living in the agony of life and death. How long did the battle

last between the machine gun and the rifles I do not know. I had lost all sense of time. I only know that the machine gun was silenced as with a knife. The next moment the welkin rang with a long, powerful and triumphant shout.

"Hurra! Hurra!"

Our side had triumphed. Our men were coming. We had shattered the glass of our windows and were clinging to the iron work. The fight had come to our street. Hundreds of bullets, like mad bees, were buzzing in the air throughout the length of the street, striking against the windows, the balconies and the pavement. Far in the distance, there were cries from the windows, "You will get hit, get behind the walls."

We ran back and took shelter under the wall. But three youths would not listen to reason. I . . . ian clung to one window, the chauffeur and the stranger to another. I . . . ian was shouting with all his might, "Ah, my brave lads, my life a sacrifice unto you. Hurry, hurry, we are here." He was fiercely shaking the iron grating, trying to tear it off.

"Hurra, Hurra!" came the shouts from the outside as the crowd milled toward us.

"Boys, we are here, we are here."

And our men—with rifles and revolvers or unarmed—kept rushing on, toward us.

"The door, the door," suddenly shouted one of our companions. I did not know who the man was, but, as if we had been waiting for this very command, all of us instantly rushed at the door. There was a staggering creaking at the hinges and presently a crash. The door was open. We stampeded like madmen through the corridor to the balcony, and from there to the prison yard. We were free.

The Cheka yard was filled with soldiers and unarmed men, young men and boys and even children. It was an indescribable commotion, shouting and screaming, a bed-

lam of joy. I noticed a few familiar faces, my old friends from Van, but only for a moment. There was no time to look around. I was being hustled from hand to hand, from embrace to embrace. They were kissing me on the face and the hands, mad with joy, shouting and embracing and kissing.

The iron gate of the prison was open. From the window of the opposite house a woman leaned out. It was Mrs. Varya Sahakian, her dress crumpled her hair disheveled, her hands stretched toward us, screaming fearfully:

"Avetik, Avetik!" Avetik was her husband, Avetik Sahakian.

"He is free, Madame," I shouted back. "He is free, be easy, he will join you right away."

As a matter of fact I knew nothing about Avetik who was in the Central prison, nor could I tell the woman. The crowd again had surrounded me and was rushing me from hand to hand.

"Take the upper street, the upper street."

They took us up the Karjikian Street. I had to go in the opposite direction but could not pierce the crowd. Having noticed the officer V. M . . . ian in the crowd, I shouted at him to take word to my daughter that I would soon see her. The fight was not yet over. There was heavy firing in the direction of railroad station. Perhaps that was the reason they were leading me up the street.

"This way, this way," a woman was calling to us.

"No, no, the upper street."

"This way, I tell you, this home is safe," the woman insisted.

Elbowing their way through the crowd, a few men opened a path for me and Moussinian. I no longer asked them where they were taking us, I was so anxious to be rid of the crowd and the noise that I was willing to enter the first house. They took

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us inside and locked the door. It was a small house with modest fixtures but a very clean room. To this day I do not know who was host. We became seated. The lady of the house was zealously at work, happy coming in and going out. She prepared a table for us, constantly chattering and laughing. Outside on the balcony there was a little girl, her hands pressing against her knees, and bloating her red cheeks, she was blowing away at the samovar.

"Mr. Mousinian, congratulations," I said, "they are serving us tea. You would not believe me when I told you."

"With lemon?" Mousinian asked mischievously.

"No, you'll have to go without the lemon, but something tells me there will be sugar."

And indeed, there was sugar. Not only sugar but cheese and a little butter and white bread. Who was the king in this world who that morning had a better breakfast than we did?

It was a royal breakfast and the hostess was more than cordial. Still we had to go see what was happening in the city. We thanked the lady and stepped out into the street. It must have been 8 in the morning since the sun was high on Nork. It was a hot, bright, smiling morning. With light hearts and light steps Mousinian and I shuffled through the snow. These secondary streets were deserted but when we hit the Abovian Boulevard it seemed we had plunged into a veritable river of men—a river which had been overflowed by spring floods, and constricted between its two narrow banks, was rolling and surging over toward the Parliament building below.

I never imagined there could be so many people in Erivan. Not only on the sidewalks, but in main street, there was not room where one could drop a needle. The air was ringing with cries of jubilation. The Armenian Tricolor flags were waving from

all windows and balconies. In spots the Tricolor was seen floating over the surging multitude.

They saw and recognized me, and in an instant I was surrounded, captured, and hoisted on shoulders.

"Long live! Long live!"

I was in the air, carried on shoulders, heads and hands, a very awkward position, I must say.

For an instant I saw my daughter. She was trying to cut herself a way through the crowd to reach me. I shouted at her but in an instant the human current had carried me away.

I myself was in great dismay. I was losing my eye glasses. It is not an easy thing to lose your glasses in Erivan. I would become blind. I begged them to lower me down so I could put my glasses in my pocket but my pleadings were drowned in the general tumult.

At the bend of Zavarian Street I was vigorously attacked.

"Bring him here, here. Where are you taking him?" voices rang. Two hands firmly clutched the tails of my coat. It was my brother's wife Pavla. She would not let me go. Finally the crowd followed her to the door of my brother's house. Here Pavla tore me loose and pushed me inside the house.

Inside, I took a deep breath and was seated. I rolled a cigaret from my brother's tobacco and started to inhale the smoke in great gulps. My brother seemed very uneasy and worried. When the street was quieted I wanted to leave but Pavla would not have it. She insisted on serving me a cup of cocoa (hot chocolate). She thought that day every man in Erivan who had something good in the closets should bring it out—sugar, coffee, cacao, condensed milk, fruits, cognac, and confectioneries—everything, everything should be placed on the table.

While Pavla was boiling the water for the cocoa, I stepped into the wash room to freshen up a bit. Outside, there again were cries of Hurra, long live! Some carriages came to a stop in front of our door. In came Dr. Ohandjanian, Simon Vratzian, and I think company commander Sumbat and a few other men.

We embraced, soap, water and all.

Half an hour later I came out. I wanted somehow to reach my home and embrace my daughter. But it was impossible. The minute they saw me, the crowd took hold of me and again hoisted me to their shoulders.

Below me, on the square, there were thousands of jubilant men and women with joyful faces and shouts in their hearts. On my side gently waved the Republic's Tricolor. I muttered a few words, I do not know what, which was supposed to be a

speech. Then we made our way to the government building. On the way we were joined by M. M . . . ian, with his tattered clothes of the wanderer, his face unshaven for days. He was determined to stick to me, panting and running beside me, now on one side, now on the other, talking endlessly.

He had so many plans seething in his mind, to place troops at a certain spot, to send the cannon to another post, to seize a certain bridge, to fortify a certain line. He was drunk, it seemed, I do not know from drink, or from his emotion.

At the government building the Fatherland Committee of Deliverance under the leadership of Simon Vratzian already were busy at work in organizing the defense and forming a new government.

But down below, in the direction of the railroad station, the firing still continued.

● THE DISCOVERY — A SHORT STORY:

EVERYONE SHOULD BE ARMENIAN!

CHARLES TEKEYAN

Many people know me. I am Herant Stepanian. I have eleven banks in seven countries and I own numerous corporations around the world. Very few Armenians are not rich. We live without wasting valuable time in despair or fear. Even if we are penniless we enjoy life in countless ways and clasp the future in our arms.

In revising my will, I was intending to divide my wealth equally among my children. Perhaps I would include Armen, despite what he did ten years ago. He is the youngest of the twelve, a struggling actor in New York and as handsome as his mother was beautiful.

I am eighty-one years old but that doesn't mean I am old. It takes a full hundred years for an Armenian to realize he isn't young anymore. I do not expect to die before the end of the twentieth century but an up-to-date will is necessary because I do travel a good deal and an accident can occur. Also, I may see a Turk somewhere and knock him down and while walking away, I will be stabbed in the back most likely.

I am always thinking about Armen. He does not have to struggle. Two of my banks are in New York and he could have a rather easy job with a plump salary. But no, Armenians have to be ambitious! And paradoxical! Armen performs on a stage even though none of his ancestors ever have. For hundreds of years the Stepanians have been traders. Who knows—perhaps they

were actors too. Many moral and emotional dramas were performed in the bazaars, not deliberately, but nonetheless dynamically.

Ten years ago when I learned he was going to marry a blonde who was in acting school with him, I warned him not to do it. I wrote him letter after letter and finally said I would disown him if he married anyone who was not an Armenian. I had nothing against other people. But by choosing mates from their own, my children were allowing certain qualities to remain. The Turks could not deprive us of being Armenian, and time couldn't, nor geography. But without doubt inter-marriage would.

Nevertheless Armen married the girl. I sent a cablegram from London to New York stating that I never wished to see him again and was severing all ties with him.

I kept my word. For more than ten years he didn't receive a cent from me and I did not send a gift when his child was born although it was a boy. I would visit my other children and grandchildren frequently regardless of the fact that I resided in London and they were scattered throughout the world. But I must confess I often had the urge to go to New York to take a look at Armen's boy.

Armen had been less than twenty when he had married the blonde. I'd been certain the marriage would fail. It was a shame to disinherit him for an act of promiscuity.

And yet I had to be sure that by now he deserved to be included in the will.

My New York attorney, at my behest, had an investigation made. I received a trans-Atlantic call from him one morning recently while I was having a massage. The information he gave me surprised me. Armen was still married to the foreigner and, moreover, seemed to be happy with her. In his career he wasn't so successful and his income was just about sufficient for them to survive. As for my grandson, he was ten years old, a bright, pleasant lad, sturdy and athletically inclined, the peer of any of the young Armenian princes that flourished in antiquity, the report ran.

It was quite startling, furthermore, to hear that the boy resembled me, since I have more than a score of grandchildren and none of them is like me to any great degree. This one—the half Armenian—might become an exact duplication of me, according to the lawyer.

That night, I could not sleep too well, thinking about him. I have a penthouse atop the best hotel in London. My bed was specially constructed for me and cost almost as much as a ship. But that night I tossed from side to side, like an old freighter in a storm. If the boy was like me, I had to see just how much. If he was a real Armenian, there were so many things I could do for him. I wondered if I should have him placed on a plane and brought to me.

We Armenians are without doubt the wisest people in the world. We had to be. We were driven from our land by savages and they—the Turks—massacred us and for generations cut us down with their utter wickedness. Now, here we are, still one of the world's sprightliest races, admittedly much less in number but rapidly replenishing our ranks. We stand everywhere with heads unbowed and hearts unstilled, smiling and taking the lead wherever we go, remaining as Armenian as ever, as bold and

as kind, as clever and as creative, as restless and as humble.

As I was saying, we are wise, but sometimes we are so stubborn we become quite unwise. For instance, I was too stubborn to get on a plane and go to New York, forgetting what Armen did ten years ago.

I met an American at the bar in my hotel. I wish I hadn't met him. I love Americans but this one got on my nerves. He was a retired army officer and we were drinking screwdrivers. Talking politics, we got into a heated discussion and became very hot under the collar. I mentioned I was an Armenian and looked forward to Armenia's independence.

"All of you nationalistic bennies are the same," he muttered. "You Armenians are the Irish of the Near East. Why must all of you be so fanatic? In a second you'll be going into that *heritage* routine and handing me that *culture* bunk! Wise up! We're on our way to the moon!"

His long military service obviously had dulled his senses. . . . of patriotism. Quite ironically. At any rate, he was a man of low intellect and his remarks had no effect on me. I am the only person over fifty that I know who is not a grumbler.

What does bother me is our increasing trend toward assimilation. Armenians have a culture that is thousands of years old and, like me, refuses to die. But I am afraid our youngsters will kill it by marrying indiscriminately with outsiders. First of all, they are killing their chances for real happiness. Only an Armenian knows how rare is the heart in another Armenian. Only an Armenian appreciates the grandeur of the Armenian soul. Only an Armenian is aware of the beauty of an Armenian's sensitivity.

Others have accused me of loving my people to excess. Nonsense! Can anyone love life too much? I live through *them* as well as through myself. Their well-being and happiness flows into me constantly.

I've been accused of boasting too. But who wouldn't be proud to be an Armenian? It is an *art* to be one. I feel I speak without conceit. We are a minority but for centuries we have demonstrated that our attributes are major ones. I defy any group anywhere to match our faith, courage and perseverance!

In the early days of the depression when I was in New York for a short visit the banks were closing and the time had come for me to take over the control of two. An Armenian knows how to be incomparably patient and has an instinct for timing, for knowing exactly when to spring into action. But in my life I've been more than a banker. First I was a student, then an adventurer and a revolutionary, later a businessman and dilettante, and finally a philanthropist. But all along I have tried to be, informally, a vigorous scholar. I have read widely in all fields, in five languages, pursuing a variety of studies. Long ago I plowed through the Harvard Classics. I have read most of the so-called world's greatest books and many of the simply great ones. Daily I still continue to read a dozen or so newspapers. Armenia was the first Christian nation in the world but I have read The Koran as carefully as the bible, and I am familiar with the other time-worn tranquilizers.

Lately I have been trying to do a bit of writing. I think I will make it a new career. After eighty a man should be somewhat sensible as a writer. The theme of one of George Bernard Shaw's plays is that man does not live long enough to realize the full intellectual, moral, and spiritual powers he is capable of.

All Armenians are writers just as all Italians are singers. And when we write we have a philosophical point of view. The crimes committed against us by the Turks would have made anyone a philosopher. All of us agree on one thing: the Turks are

the malignant growths of humanity. Aren't such growths always removed to preserve health?

By all means I am sure of this—that my life has been more exciting because I am Armenian. And after a lifetime's study I feel that perhaps Armenians are not the only ones who can be Armenian. Others can attain certain qualities too. Being Armenian—well, it's almost like belonging to a wonderful religion. *Everybody* should be Armenian.

I told my valet to pack my bags, finally deciding to go to New York to meet my youngest grandson. I found out that Armen would be away, appearing in a play in Chicago. I could see the boy without reuniting with his father, and later I could quietly come to a decision about what to do with Armen in my will.

Anyway, I had to go to New York. It was for a venture that was charitable but quite important to me. I wished to take care of the details personally. Not far from the city and yet as far away from its pointless tempo as possible, I was going to have a magnificent chateau erected. It would be a place where children of Armenian ancestry could spend their summers in pastoral surroundings if they were unable to go to a resort. They would be my guests, thousands of them, playing and resting and eating without limit. And I would have instructors for them there—sympathetic, intelligent men and women who would help the striplings to advance mentally and physically in the great Armenian tradition.

Armen's son was named after me but I doubted if that was also a reason why I was now rather impatient to take a look at him. Would he mind being held and kissed by an eighty-one-year-old grandfather adorned by a big white mustache? He was the only grandson I had in America, Armen being the only one of my children venturesome enough to go to that wonder-

ful country. No matter where an Armenian lives, the place automatically becomes Armenia. But Armen was different, unfortunately. He had gotten lost, had forgotten his loyalty to *hairik* and *hairenik* and to his *own* fatherhood. At least he had remembered to name the child after me. There was hope. Perhaps I was being too rigid, I thought. After seeing his son I would know what to think and do about *my* son.

Ah, how abundant the fruits of fatherhood were if one lived long enough! Now there was a Herant Stepanian in America, besides England, France, Switzerland, Italy, Turkey, India, Japan and Australia! My roots had spread throughout the world.

When I arrived at International Airport, several officers from my American corporations met me with the limousines. I left them as soon as we reached Manhattan and I retired to my suite in the Waldorf. Up there twenty-eight stories high, I paused to meditate. Below my windows lay the city, vast and fantastic, and nothing in it was as important to me at the moment as a little boy whose mother wasn't even an Armenian.

It was nine at night and there were more lights out there than stars in the universe. Here was a universe man had made for himself and it looked like paradise. And indeed it was! Where else did so many people receive so much satisfaction in their lives in so many different ways?

In all directions the buildings were countless and I wondered in which one my youngest grandchild slept, only half Armenian but asleep as soundly as every child.

The next day was Saturday. Perfect. No school. Room service brought my breakfast and as soon as I finished it I phoned Armen's apartment. His wife answered. She sounded stunned when I told her who I was. She invited me over immediately. I asked if the little one had arisen already.

"Harry's having his cereal," she said. "He wants to go out to play but I'll make him wait for you."

"Harry?"

"That's his name. It's the American way of saying your name. . . .Harry Stephens."

"Harry Stephens? Oh, God!"

"Armen changed his name too. Actors do that anyway. He's known as Al Stephens."

The receiver trembled in my hand. Oh, that Armen! Not only would I leave him nothing, I would also sue him!

"Is Armen there?" I asked.

"He went out-of-town with a show. He'll be back tonight."

"I'll be right over," I said.

I was furious. Tonight I would catch a plane back to London. I was afraid of the things I'd say if I remained long enough to see Armen.

I went down and took a cab. Ten minutes later, arriving, I noticed the neighborhood was the one where many Armenians had lived during my first visit to New York. As immigrants they had taken apartments close to their church. Their mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers and children had died for being Christians. It had been only natural these immigrants would have gone as near their church as possible—they had made more than the customary contributions to it.

And I imagined it was only a coincidence that Armen's apartment was here. I rang the bell and a boy opened the door. My gracious, that was almost exactly how I looked at about that age! I moved closer but I didn't kiss him. I shook his hand. Inside, I shook his mother's hand too, but she put a kiss on my cheek.

"You look so young!" she said. "No more than fifty. But that's how much you were when Armen was born, and he's thirty now!"

"Thank you," I said. "You are very kind."

"You're an amazing man, all right!"

"Armenians stay young a long time because they've been civilized so long they're accustomed to it and do not find it such a strain."

"Armen's been waiting years for you to come to America."

"I thought you had blonde hair," I said.

"I don't bleach it anymore."

"You could almost pass for an Armenian girl."

She laughed. She seemed quite sweet. "I've become Armenian and Armen's become American. He's lost his accent. You'd never think he'd spent the first nineteen years of his life in Europe."

"Are there many Armenians in this neighborhood?"

"Just a handful now. Lots of them moved to the suburbs. Armenians like to own the houses they live in."

"Yes," I said.

"Grandpa," Harry said. "Why do you live in London instead of Armenia?"

"That's a long story, my boy."

"But grandpa, where's Armenia?"

"I don't know anymore. I'm afraid it exists only in the thoughts of men who dream of the day they can go home again. But you must find Armenia in your *heart*, my son, and make my dreams come true."

"Tomorrow's Sunday," his mother said. "Will you come to church with us?"

"No," I said.

"There's an Armenian church around the corner."

"I know. I paid off the second mortgage."

"We go there every Sunday," she said.

"It's Armen's real home."

"When did he become so religious?"

"He's happy there. That's why we live around here. The church, the Armenian restaurants and stores—they've kept his morale up."

"I sing in the choir!" Harry said.

"Can you speak Armenian?"

"No, but I've learned a lot of words. My father's teaching me new ones all the time."

"Let me see if you know how to say grandfather," I said.

"Metz-hairik."

"Right! Come here. Come, my son, and let me hug you."

He marched up to me obediently. I grabbed him and kissed his face on three different places.

"I will give you something for being so good," I said.

I had some American money, mostly hundreds. I gave him one and told him to buy a toy. He stared at the hundred-dollar bill and then at me and he thanked me. I hugged him and kissed him again. He was built like the rock of Gibraltar. Even the young princes of ancient Armenia were probably seldom as magnificent as this, I thought.

"Well, we're glad to have you here," his mother said. Armen's always talking about you."

"He is?"

"He was planning to invite you here soon as he landed a big part in a play on Broadway."

"I am here because I am building a chateau for the children in this city. It will be in the woods about a hundred miles away."

"Marvelous!"

"What's a chateau, grandpa?"

"A villa."

"What's a villa?"

"In this country, I believe they call it a ranch."

"Will you have horses there?"

"Of course."

"Yippee! I'm going to be a cowboy!"

"You'll learn how to play polo and cricket and—"

"I like baseball!"

"All right, Harry, let's go to a baseball game this afternoon."

"Sure, but I'd like to go out for awhile now. Can you take me to the park, grandpa?"

"Certainly!"

What a heavenly morning it was! The sun was powerful, the warmth pleasant. Harry and I jumped into a cab and hurried to the boathouse in Central Park. We rented a rowboat and started exploring a lovely lake. He did the rowing while I sat back and admired everything, including my incredible grandson. This was not Lake Van and that hill beyond was not Mount Ararat, but if any part of New York under the noontime sun was at all like paradise, this was it. The water gleamed and the trees around it were shyly getting ready for summer. The people were gleaming too. It was May. No one was shy. Young couples embraced wholeheartedly. In America, May was the time the bold and the shy came out into the open.

I wished I had a camera with me. But I had many beautiful pictures as I watched everything. They were imprinted on the retina of my mind along with the sight of Harry when I first saw him this morning. . . and the other unforgettable moments in my life, such as the first kiss I gave my late wife at the end of the ceremony on our wedding day more than sixty years ago when she was sixteen and I was eighteen.

"Are you getting tired?" I asked Harry.

"I can row this boat all day, grandpa."

He stopped rowing for a minute and looked at me intently, saying, "Daddy says you are very rich and very smart too."

"Every Armenian is smarter than the smartest alien."

"What's a alien?"

"An alien is anyone who isn't even slightly Armenian."

"Daddy's told me a lot about you. He thinks you're a great man."

"He does, eh?"

"You saved a lot of Armenians from the Turks, didn't you? How many Turks did you kill, grandpa?"

"Many but not enough!"

"I hope I can be like you someday."

"God bless you, my boy."

After we brought the boat back, we bought sandwiches and milk and searched for a spot to have a picnic. A couple of small hoodlums started throwing stones and knocked my homburg right off my head. Harry dashed after them and they ran away. He picked up the hat and gave it to me.

"Thank you, Harry."

"They were Turks!"

"How do you know?"

"Daddy told me. He says the Turks aren't the only ones who are Turks. People who are mean are Turks too. So are people who are stupid or dirty or insincere. Daddy says even certain *things* are Turks—like diseases and wars."

"Your daddy is right. He knows more than I thought."

"Even Turks don't have to be Turks, grandpa."

"Really?"

"There are Turks everywhere, all around the world, maybe even in us a little. I'm going to fight them!"

"Bravo, my son!"

We sat on fine cushions of grass and began to eat the sandwiches. We were so hungry we ate silently. . . but cheerfully. Together we consumed ten sandwiches and five pints of milk. A feast in paradise could not have been so satisfying.

"I'm glad you're going to build a ranch for us kids," Harry said. "We need it."

"There will be space for two or three thousand," I said. "You'll be one of the first to go, Harry."

"Can my friends come with me?"

"Are they Armenians?"

"Just one is."

"This ranch is only for American children of Armenian descent."

"Then only *half* of me can go there!"

"Harry, what are you talking about?"

"There's lots of poor kids in New York, grandpa."

"I can't let them all go to the ranch!"

"I'd love you if you did!"

"How big do you think this ranch will be . . . and how rich do you think I am? Isn't it enough that I will have so many Armenian boys and girls as my guests for the whole summer?"

"In New York . . . when a kid needs help . . . nobody asks if his mother or father is an Armenian."

"You're asking me to send every urchin on the street to a glorious vacation! Please be reasonable, Harry."

"I'd be proud of you, grandpa."

"Yes, but—"

"You'd be the best grandfather any kid ever had!"

I patted his head and smiled. Several children went by on bicycles. One of them looked like an Armenian. This beautiful

park is for everyone, I thought. In Turkey, it would be only for the Turks.

"You win, Harry! I will have a new policy. All Armenian children will be eligible to go to the ranch, even those who are Armenian in *heart only*!"

He threw his arms around me. He held me tightly and kissed me. "Only Turks won't be eligible!" he said.

"Harry, you are as smart as your grandpa!"

I had no desire to take a plane and leave that night. Armen arrived and I congratulated him for remaining an Armenian, and thanked him for the fine grandson he had given me.

The next day was Sunday. Like one big happy family we attended our church around the corner. During the afternoon I hired an automobile and we went riding to the Catskills and ate shish-kebab at a hotel. Later I had a chat about financial matters with Armen. Strangely enough, money does not interest him or excite him as much as it does me. He was more or less impassive when I told him his inheritance would be so enormous he could form an army and conquer the Turks!

ROLE OF THE ARMENIANS IN WORLD CIVILIZATION

PROF. VAHAN TOTOMIANTZ

III.

The Armenians in Byzantium

The mass migration of the Armenians into the Byzantine Empire dates from the fifth century when not only families of the aristocracy but simple laborers as well continued to take refuge among the Greeks. Up to the fourth century, the center of the Armenians was Athens, where Proeresias, a savant of phenomenal ability, taught philosophy in the Armenian and Greek tongues.

Still at the time of Constantine the Great the Armenian emigrants started to play a certain role in the army and the Byzantine courts. Thus, in 550, the Emperor Justinian handed the supreme command of his army over to Nerses (472-568) who chased the Goths from Italy. The reorganization of liberated Italy was entrusted to Nerses. There is an epic poem on this subject entitled "L'Italia liberata dai Goti" written by Giovan Giorgio Trissino in 1547.

A great number of Manishays and Paulicians were settled in the environs of Philippopolis by the emperor Tzimisches in the tenth century who followed the example of the illustrious emperor Canstantin V. In view of his Armenian nationality, Tzimisches could not handle these communities with the dull fanaticism of the Orthodox church; furthermore he could absolutely count on the fact that their

brave legions would be infinitely more indispensable for the defense of the Balkan peninsula. By their purer and more active Christianity, writes Geizer, they had a profound influence upon the Slavs recently baptized.

Professor Strzygowski in his monumental work "Armenian Architecture and Europe" (Vienna 1918) while speaking of the role of the Armenians in Byzantium says: "Thus again Artaxazdos, chief of the Armenian division under Leon III (716-745) was a Pahlavooni, Armenian family of aristocracy, and the Armenian aristocracy was very numerously represented in the Roman cavalry." (Page 733). From 932-935, under the Roman emperor Lecapenus (919-944) an Armenian, General Kourken (Kurkuas) captured the city of Edessa, in order to bring to Constantinople the image of Jesus Christ which tradition ascribes to the time of the Armenian king Abgar of the Christian era.

According to Professor Gelzer "Die Genesis der byzantinischen Themenverfassung" (page 981), "the Armenians were dominant not only in the ranks of the generals, but also in the government of the Oriental Roman Empire. It was during the reigns of Nicephorus Phocas (963-1025), Jean Tzimiszes (969-976) and Basilus II. (976-1025) that Tiridates (Trdat), an Ar-

menian architect, was called to reconstruct the church of St. Sofia, built in 537.

In view of the fact that a certain number of the Byzantine emperors came from military circles, it is no surprise that many Armenian emigrants ascended the throne of Byzantium.

It is a known fact that the Emperor Maurice (542-602) of the Justinian dynasty and the founder of the Heracleian dynasty—Heracleus (610-641) were both Armenians. In this last-named dynasty Vardan Philippicus should be mentioned, whose name reveals his Armenian origin. A. Vasilieff in his book "History of the Byzantine Empire" discusses this subject (page 255, vol. I). A historian of the seventh century, Sebeos, writes that the family of Heracleus was related to the famous Armenian house of the Arsacides, while Professor Koulakovski, "History of Byzantium" (page 24, vol. III) says that "the Heracleian dynasty, or Armenian origin, gave birth to and realized the Byzantine ideal of the conquest of Africa.

The succeeding dynasty called Isaurian, counted among its emperors Leon III the Isaurian (680-741) and Leon V the Armenian, who reigned from 813 to 820.

However, it is the dynasty called the Macedonian Dynasty founded by Basilus I, which is the most important, for, according to the famous historian and byzantologist Charles Diehl, "History of the Byzantine Empire" (Paris, 1920, page 99)—during the whole of the X Century, the Armenians must have played a very important part in the affairs of the Byzantine Monarchy by furnishing it with soldiers, generals, administrators, diplomats, and emperors: Roman Lacedenus and John Tzimiszes were both of Armenian origin."

Naturally among the emperors of the dynasty in question there were some good ones and some bad ones. However, thanks to the Macedonian dynasty, Byzantium was able to prolong her existence for about

five centuries. Besides, it should be noted that all of these emperors were not fighters, but excellent administrators also, while Constantine Porphyrogenitus was scholar and author of several historical and philosophical books.

Out of these Byzantine emperors of Armenian descent which numbered fourteen, we must not fail to mention the part played by their wives, altogether eight in number: Marie, wife of Constantine V (746-775); Marina, wife of Constantine VI (780-797) the son of Irene, Euphrosyne, the wife of Michael II (820-828), Theodora Mamikonian who, although the wife of Theophilus Iconoclast (829-842) had orthodox convictions; Theodosia, wife of Leon VI; Helen Gabeghian, wife of Porphyrogenitus (913-959); Theodora, wife of John I Tzimiszes (969-976) and finally Theodora III (1042-1056) who played an important enough role in her times.

Among the numerous generals of Armenian origin we name only Narses (or Nerses), the conqueror of the Goths and liberators of Italy, (Gourgehin) Kourken, Varda Foca, and Varda Scler. The first one lived in the sixth and last three in the tenth centuries. It is interesting to note that the two Vardas, while in civil war, settled their fight in single combat in which Varda Foca was the winner.

IV.

Basil I, Emperor of Byzantium, Founder of the Macedonian Dynasty

Under the reign of Michael Rhangabe (811-813) a humble family of laborers lived in the environs of Adrianopolis, in Macedonia, whose name was soon to become illustrious by the grace of the eldest son. All Byzantine chroniclers, after Christine VII, gave an Armenian origin to the family of Basil I. Samuel of Ani, Armenian historian, even gives the name of the place of origin of this family, Thil in the province

of Taron in Armenia where later Basil constructed a church.

It was in this modest circle of peasants that Basil was born about 812. He would have probably grown up in the happy mediocrity of his parents, solely given over to the work in the fields, if an unforeseen event had not abruptly forced out his family from the land where they lived.

At the time the empire was at war with Bulgaria: the Emperor Nicephorus (802-811) had been killed in a bloody battle, and his son had been so seriously wounded that the power was given over to his brother-in-law, Michael Rhangabe, who in turn was conquered at Verinicia in 813 by the celebrated Bulgarian prince Kroum. He next marched resolutely on Constantinople, the "city protected by God," where a revolution was in the offing. One of the leading generals of the empire, Leon, an Armenian, profiting by the terror and general discontent dethroned Michael, exiling him together with his family to a monastery and had himself proclaimed emperor of Byzantium. For the empire the event was nothing but one of joy. Kroum wounded before the walls of Constantinople was obliged to lift the siege and reenter Bulgaria, burning and sacking everything on his way. Thus, Adrianople, after having been besieged by the Bulgarians, fell in their hands. Its inhabitants were reduced to slavery and ten to twelve thousand men, not counting women and children, were carried away from the banks of the Danube.

Among these unfortunates were found the bishop of Adrianople, Manuel and the parents of Basil, with the child himself still in his swaddling-clothes. The future emperor passed his infancy and youth still on Bulgarian soil. He grew up in his family with no advantages of an education. Intellectually the child appeared weak; only his physical power could have a way for him in the world and that is what he got.

It seems that the first few years following their exile was relatively easy. Not only were they free to practice their religion in a plainly pagan country, but being good christians, they sought to spread the Gospel about them. While Kroum was still alive, the bishop Manuel aided by his Armenian compatriots, converted a great number of Bulgarians to the christian faith, but on the ascension of Omartag (or Mor-tagon) in 819, the progress of christianity rendered the new king indignant who started a fierce persecution of the neophytes.

Basil was twenty-five years old on his returning to Macedonia where he entered the service of the strategist Tzantzes, purely as a matter of livelihood. Working on the farm yielded practically nothing. However, at Constantinople, those who had a little knowledge and understanding, could gain a fortune and even glory. Thus one day, after shaking off doubts and maternal love, he took the road for Byzantium, having only force, intelligence and ambition for his fortune.

He arrived at the imperial city on a Sunday evening, ill from fatigue and covered with dust, and went to wait under the gate of the church of the Monastery of St. Diomedes, which later, Basil ordered restored in testimony to his recognition that it was there that his luck was born. Continuing their marvelous stories about the youth of the future emperor, the chroniclers have, so to speak, embellished and poetized these humble beginnings of Basil according to the inclination of their imagination. According to their claims, the martyr Diomedes, during the early hours of the night should have briskly awakened the abbot of the monastery, Nicolas, ordering him to go to greet the emperor at the door of the church. Naturally the monk did nothing about it, thinking it merely a dream and went to sleep again. A second call had no

more success. Then the Saint, filled with anger, struck his servitor violently, who decided to go out and call Basil as Diomedes has ordered him. Basil was surprised by this strange intervention and rose to answer the abbot who led him inside the cloister where he made known to him the strange dream which had just come to him a while previous. Basil became acquainted with the abbot in this manner, who, becoming interested in him, helped introduce him into the service of a great duke, parent of the emperor (strategist) of Peloponesus, Theophylites.

Just like all the aristocrats of princely families, Theophylites had a regular small court about him, modeled after the imperial court, and there as at the palace, the handsome and strong young people, great wrestlers and good horsemen were loved. In such an environment Basil was not long in making his physical qualities known to all and becoming the favorite of his master.

Theophylites chose him to accompany him on his voyage to Patras where he had some affairs of state to look after. There Basil made the acquaintance of a certain widow, Danielis whose fortune and power were fully the equal of a sovereign. Basil had the good fortune to please this lady, as well as a good many others in his life. Moreover, he had enough physical qualities to make even the pious widow herself remark freely. A. Vogh, in his huge "Biography of Basil I," states of "the intervention of a poor monk in prayer in the church of St. Andre, who would arise at the passing of Basil in order to greet him with the title of emperor." However, whether the noble matron had made a prediction or only her heart had spoken, the result was the same for Basil. She had the greatest affection for him, so that when Theophylites returned to Byzantium she wished to keep the favorite (Basilus) at her home,

since a sickness had kept him from following his master. Opposed to the endearments and favors of the widow who wished to become his adopted mother, he did however, agree to be the devoted friend of her son Jean. On leaving Patras, he held great riches. Not forgetting his filial loyalties, he sent a great deal of help to his poor parents in Macedonia. Being a wise man, he did not let himself become intoxicated by his growing fortune, but stayed in the service of Theophylites.

Two events, though obscure, served to make him famous in Byzantium and increase his Herculean strength. One day Auignonus, son of Laesar Bardas, wanted to give a huge banquet in honor of his father, where all the greatest Byzantines were assembled. Among those present was Theophylites, Basil's patron. According to custom no such feast was complete without bouts and combats. At the end of the feasting two Bulgarian wrestlers entered the dinning hall. One of them was believed to be invincible. Theophylites then suggested that his protege take on the champion and it was agreed upon. Basil was the victor amid the acclamations of the audience who thought, without doubt, that this day for Byzantium was worth a battle won.

The other event was decisive. The Emperor had just received a horse as a gift which no one could tame, and in his anger at not being able to mount he was already speaking of cutting off the hind legs, when Basil offered to tame him. The Emperor, charmed by the presence and strength of this young peasant, did not want to allow such a young man to remain in the hands of Theophylites for too long, and placed him in charge of the royal stable. Hereafter his position was made. Basil had crossed the threshold of the palace. This was in 856.

At this time the Emperor Michael continued to lead a dissolute life. He drained

the treasury with his comedians and coachmen and scandalized Byzantium with his women. It was not difficult to work on his weak will, provided that one made much of his amour-propre, was vulgar in talk, and took pleasure in his amusements. Basil, by his position, was all-powerful. The emperor became completely dominated by his new favorite, who was soon named co-emperor, that is to say, Caesar, which cost him dearly in a moral way. Michael forced him to leave his wife and marry one of his mistresses, with whom he continued the same relations. Basil, sick of participating in the orgies of the drunkard emperor, often refused to be present. The Emperor, furious, sought to get rid of him by a murder. Basil noticed that Michael was beginning to distrust him and warning him, he ordered his men to assassinate Michael and proclaimed himself emperor.

Basil was about 45 years old when he became the only master of the empire. From that time he appears to us under a different light than his old friend Michael the third. Thus it is this last aspect that naturally frightened his contemporaries.

With his accession, in contrast with his predecessor, Basil showed very marked religious sentiment which never left him. "Each day," according to his young son Constantine, in his biography, "he went to pray to Christ for success in his enterprises and holding St. Michael as the intercessor. On return to Constantinople after his military campaigns, his first anxiety was to visit the churches, to give thanks to God for His good deeds, and his appreciation is expressed by the magnificent religious building built by him.

His piety was not always fruitless. He openly poured out huge sums of money for charitable works, which won him astonishing renown for kindness and generosity. On the day following his accession, he distributed numerous gifts and soon, at his

orders, hospitals, rest homes, and hotels were opened for the sick and the aged. He used to repeat to his son, piety consists in assisting those who are in need. Consider that day lost if you have done no good turn to anyone. It is the only means of obtaining the mercy of the Ruling King." "It is astonishing how carefully the subjects examine the deeds of the rulers. A sovereign gains two advantages at the same time by observing justice. He makes himself secure from calamities, and becomes an example for men by his virtue." One can easily understand the reason for the enthusiasm on the part of his contemporaries, who hadn't seen such a virtuous sovereign for a long time. "He is kind, liberal, a pacifist, wise, just, friend of Christ, a faithful observer of the law; he loves peace, and is generous to the poor," says an anonymous poet. Nicetas of Byzantium, starts his letter to disprove a book attributed to Mahomet by a magnificent portrait of Basil, saying: "What can I say against the very wise governor of an empire, his peaceful conduct toward the church, his justice, his patience, and good nature, his good deeds, and his liberality, his faith and his zeal to spread the Gospel of Christianity."—Vogh, Basil I, Paris, 1908, pages 49-50.

The first measure taken by Basil on taking the throne was to put the finances in order. It was absolutely necessary to put the treasury in order so ruined by Michael. Basil, calling together his senate, and the principal officers of his government opened the imperial treasury in their presence. It was almost empty. The council decided that all those who, during the life of Michael, had taken generous and undue amounts return the sum total taken. Basil contented himself with a half of the levies and thus immediately collected huge sums for the national coffers. As to the private treasury of Michael, it contained only the

precious debris of its former wealth.

Above all Basil had to solve the social problem in order to forestall any late disaster. Feudalism based its power upon the land wealth as in the Occident. There remained only one way to remedy it; that of attaching the peasant to his plot of ground and allowing him to be its proprietor. Thereupon, Basil sent orders out to all his princes to prevent the disastrous custom of that time which made gifts of land of the ancestors.

Another evil, no less serious and just as dangerous, was the poor administration of its financial affairs against which he fought by reforming the system of tax collection. In every case, real progress was made in civil affairs for the greatest good of the people.

Naturally, in consolidating his empire internally, Basil was strong enough to keep union among his vast provinces. The arrangements of his external affairs at that time were compromises enough. He saw his future in the realization of the most urgent need as a Christian emperor the fight with a vengeance against the muslimans.

His relations with Armenia, a bordering country, were good enough in view of the fact that Ashod I Bagratid had risen to the throne in 870. Basil was counting upon the king of Armenia to watch Arab politics and thus to impede the progress of the califs who were hard pressing on the borders of his empire.

His influence in Bulgaria was growing at the expense of Rome. Immediately upon the death of Michael, the negotiations relative to the union of the Greek and Bulgarian churches ended favorably. King Boris even sent his son Simeon to Constantinople to be educated there. These friendly relations were very advantageous to the two countries, since it allowed them to

consolidate their states internally. Peace was especially necessary for Boris in order to organize Bulgaria just recently converted to Christianity.

Basil sought to keep friendly relations with Russia by sending missions along with valuable gifts.

Henceforth, relieved from uneasiness on the condition of his northern boundaries, Basil could throw all his resources into the fight against the Arabs of the Orient, in the heart of Asia Minor, and against the Musulmans of the Occident in Italy. The emperor succeeded in extending his territories in Asia Minor and in giving Byzantium the glory she had lost in southern Italy. Old Basil, says the oldest historian of that period, could die in peace. He had accomplished in the Orient as in the Occident, a very important military task and at the same time a great deed even for civilization. The empire, as Basil left it, was the strongest and the most imposing it had ever been."

Basil was the founder of the dynasty called Macedonian, or just as well Armenian, which ruled for more than two hundred years. During this period, the Byzantine empire became as vast as during the reign of Constantine the Great. The founder of this dynasty has been reproached for a good reason in having been ungrateful toward Michael III, his benefactor. However, considering that the latter has been given the name of Michael the Drunkard by the historians, and that he was leading his empire to ruin, and on the other hand in view of the fact that of the one hundred Byzantine emperors, thirty were assassinated, the conduct of Basil can be justified. Add to this the fact that after the death of Constantine the Great, he was the most remarkable emperor of Byzantium.

Professor H. Gelzer in his "History of Byzantium"; Basil I (867-86) says: "Basil

appeared as the founder of the glorious Macedonian dynasty. The means to which Basil resorted to ascend the throne should cause him no remorse. He belonged to the number of those strong genial spirits, but cruel as well, such as Sulla, Theodorich, Clovis, Napoleon I, who do not consummate useless crimes, but who consider with the greatest calm these transgressions advantageous to them as inevitable necessities. It is impossible to doubt the Armenian origin of this dynasty. Even Photius fallen in disgrace in his efforts to again become a favored person at the court, prepared the genealogical line of the emperor dating from Arshak and Tiridates. The chevaliers, as well as the Armenian mercenaries who by their courage postponed the fall of the empire during that century, trace their origin to the ancient Arsacides and Pabla-vides with as much right as innumerable families of our aristocracy trace their origin from the Crusades and the celebrated conquerors in the tournaments."

V.

The Successors of Basil I.

The dynasty founded by Basil I, considered as Macedonian although of Armenian origin was in power for about two hundred years. Besides its founder there were other outstanding representatives among whom were Constantin VII Porphyrogenetus, Jean Tzimisces, Basil II, etc., who constitute that period in the history of Byzantium which professor Krumm-bacher calls, "the culminating point in the power of the Eastern Roman empire under the Armenian dynasty."

The Byzantine empire enjoyed peace under Constantine VII Porphyrogenetus (913-959), grandson of Basil I., as the emperor who, in devoting himself to the arts and sciences, not only patronized them and allowed them to develop but also distinguished himself in the field of literature by writing several works among which the

most outstanding was the biography of his grandfather Basil I.

According to Herzberg and Genzer, Jean Tzimisces (969-976) was an emperor who gained great popularity in Byzance owing to his pleasant character, his charming personality, and his physical strength. His reign was full of merciful deeds, justice and discipline.

He vanquished Sviatoslav, a Russian prince who marched up to the gates of Constantinople under the pretext of protecting a Bulgaria weakened by wars. He was able to occupy Eastern Bulgaria in 971 after several great battles. The efforts of Jean Tzimisces and his successor Basil II resulted in the extension of the eastern boundaries up to the Euphrates river and the northern boundaries up to the Danube. This was also the period when Syria was annexed along with Antioch (976-1025). Tzimisces gave lands to the Armenian emigrants.¹

Apparently Tzimisces protected the peasants, because he understood the character of the ulcer from which the empire was suffering, viz. the extension of feudalism as well as the gradual prostration of the freedom of the common people.

The most interesting fact to mention under the reign of Basil II was the critical condition of his empire in the ninth decade of the tenth century. An insurrection against Basil II having arisen in Asia Minor was nearing the capital, while at the same time the northern provinces of the empire were being menaced by a Bulgarian invasion. Under these difficult circumstances, Basil appealed to Prince Vladimir of Russia and succeeded in concluding an alliance with him with the following conditions: Vladimir undertook to send 6,000 men to the aid of Basil and in exchange he re-

¹ Besides distributing land and money to the poor, he freed the Armenians of Constantinople from taxes.

ceived the hand of the emperor's sister, Anne, but on condition that he accept the Christian faith for himself and his entire nation. Basil succeeded in quelling the uprising in Asia minor with the aid of the Russian auxiliary regiment, generally called, "drouzina Varangeo-russe." However, when Basil refused to fulfill his promise relative to the marriage of his sister, there followed misunderstandings between them.

The Russian prince besieged the Byzantine city of Cherson on the Crimea and taking possession of it, forced Basil to give in. Vladimir accepting Christianity was baptized and married Princess Anne of Byzantium in 988. A large part of his subjects followed the example of their sovereign and embraced the Christian faith. Vladimir had priests come from Constantinople to propagate the new religion in his country. Thus peaceful and even friendly relations became established between Russia and the Byzantine Empire, which lasted a very long time and resulted in an increase in commerce between the two countries.

Basil II was the greatest enemy of proprietors of great feudal estates. By his famous *novelle* (law) of 996, he abolished the statutes guaranteeing the property right of the landholders who had illegally usurped peasants' lands either by persuasion or force. As a complement to this law, Basil II issued a decree relative to the tax, called *allelengyon*, meaning mutual guarantee, which compelled the rich to pay the taxes of the poor in cases where the latter found it impossible to pay it.

"Basil II," writes professor G. Genzer, "followed the footsteps of his Roman ancestors not only by the manner in which he appeased the rebels in the midst of the wealthy, but also by his legislative measure. The method used in "*Novelle*" of 996 is extraordinarily energetic. Evidently all

laws relative to expropriation of peasant properties had remained a dead letter. These usurpatory methods of the noblemen were put to an end by the "*Novelle*" with unusual severity. Subterfuge in the law, whereby the great landowners endeavored to usurp the peasants' lands, was removed. The emperor openly announced that it was in the interest of the empire to oppose the concentration of vast lands in the hands of a certain few, and especially the right of transference by inheritance. This powerful monarch succeeded in breaking down the system of estates and plantations owing to his boundless energy. The protection of the middle and low classes was the chief purpose of his legislation, and that fact alone would be sufficient to place this coarse warrior on a level much higher than many other illustrious emperors."

The epoch of the Armenian dynasty covers two periods of importance and unequal duration. The first is from 867 to 1025, the year of the death of Basil II, and the second which is shorter, from 1020 to 1056, the year of the death of the Empress Theodora, the last representative of this dynasty. The first of these two periods was the most brilliant epoch in the political history of Byzantium. The Arabs on the one hand and the northern wars carried on against the Bulgarians and the Russians on the other hand, in spite of several setbacks suffered toward the end of the ninth century and the beginning of the tenth century, were crowned with brilliant successes in the second half of the tenth century and the beginning of the eleventh. The triumph of the Byzantine empire was particularly outstanding under Nicephore Phocas, a general of Armenian origin, and Jean Tzimiskes. It reached its zenith during the reign of Basil II. During this period, the separatist movements in Asia Minor were squelched, the influence of Byzance in Syria was reestablished, a part of Armenia

was annexed to the empire and the other part reduced to a vassal state, Bulgaria became a Byzantine province, and the Russian having accepted the Christianity of Byzance, maintained the most cordial relations with the empire in the fields of religion, politics, commerce and science.

"The empire," writes A. Vassilief in his excellent book, 'History of the Byzantine Empire' (volume I, page 396), "was then at its height of power and glory. The important legislative work published in an immense code of laws, the Basilijues, and a series of famous 'Novelles' directed against the injustices of the great landholders, and the intellectual progress with which the names of Patriarch Photios and Constantine Porphyrogenetus are associated, add even more to the glory and importance of the first period of this dynasty."

According to the Russian historian, N. Kareieff (The History of the Middle Ages, St. Petersburg, 1911), "the Macedonian dynasty fought against the great landholders in order to promulgate laws in favor of the peasants. The governors, the judges, and other high officials came from this class of huge propertied interests who profiting by their position, power and wealth, ruined the poorer classes. Thus the emperors of this dynasty endeavored by all means to preserve the rural communities by protecting their personal liberties and

their possessions and by maintaining their communal autonomy. At the same time this dynasty took necessary measures against the unjust enrichment of the churches and monasteries."

In conclusion, it is pertinent to add a few words about the celebrated Patriarch Photios, also of Armenian origin, who was the master and tutor of Cyrille and Methode, apostles of the Slavs. During the reign of Michael III, Caesar Vardas, the uncle of the emperor, organized a school for higher learning at Constantinople where the famous savant Photios was one of the teachers and about whom gathered the greatest minds of the empire. Thus Photios, so to speak, was the center of the literary and intellectual movement of the second half of the ninth century. Endowed with unusual talents, deeply interested in the sciences, he received an excellent education and then consecrated all of his time and energy to the teaching of others. His knowledge extended not only into the field of theology, but also in the fields of philology, philosophy and the natural sciences of law and medicine. Photios did not limit himself to teaching. He devoted a great part of his time to writing and has left a very rich and varied wealth of literature. Of particular importance among the works of Photios is his "Bibliothèque."

(To be continued)

● FROM THE ARMENIAN REVOLUTION:

AGHBIUR SEROP

(From a copy of "Droshag," Geneva, 1907)

In the autumn of 1895, precisely in the month when the Sultan's plot to massacre the Armenian populated provinces had taken final shape, Serop with quite a strong force of volunteer fighters was setting foot on the soil of the fatherland, as if having dropped from the skies. The second day of his arrival at Sokhort news was received that Baghesh had been massacred and the terror of the massacre had spread in neighboring provinces. Serop divided his company of 27 into two, sent fifteen into those villages where the fear of massacre was acute, promising that he would hasten to their aid no matter where; with the remaining twelve of his warriors he bided his time in Sokhort. The second day of the slaughter of Baghesh, suddenly, like huge embankments of black clouds, the village of Sokhort was surrounded by frenzied Kurds who wanted to cripple the village by inflicting the first blow. After that, it would be easy to massacre and loot the remaining villages. The Kurds never imagined, however, that there could be revolutionaries hidden in the village; they only thought of the villagers who, in their opinion, no matter how brave they were, were unarmed and could hardly resist five to six hundred armed Kurds. They had made great preparations to cart the rich loot of the village and to move it to their tents.

With shouts of "Salavat," like cloud-bursts, the Kurds rushed into the village from the south. The braves of the village

came out to meet them, and like the ancient warriors, having built up a barricade of carts and carriages, they prepared to meet the onslaught of the Kurdish mob. The Kurds reached the proximity of the village cemetery which was separated from the village by a ravine and a little way from which, dominating the ravine, lay Serop's company in waiting. The Kurds had scarcely crossed the cemetery and the ravine and had come face to face with the village braves when Serop with his company came down from his ambush and caught the Kurds between two fires. Taken by surprise, panicky and confused, the Kurds took to flight, leaving behind seven dead, one of whom was a Sheikh, and 40 armed prisoners. The villagers tied their prisoners and took them to the village but just then the *kaimakam* (Turkish Mayor) arrived on the scene, released the prisoners and returned their arms, advising them the while never to have the stupid folly of attacking Sokhort the next time. The Kurds protested, saying, "Effendi, it was not these Giavours who licked us but it was the Muscovite Giavours who attacked us from the rear and rained fire upon us from the sky. Our bullets would not reach them, but theirs reaped us like a harvest." The Kaimakam pretended not to believe them and sent them on their way. Meanwhile, for a bribe of 15 (gold) pounds from the Armenians, he shut his eyes to the Kurdish charge and left the village.

The following day the news came that

the village of D . . . had been besieged. Serop immediately ran with his company to their aid and broke up the siege.

Lastly, all those villages which harbored two or three of Serop's company were spared the horrors of the massacre and the pillage, with the exception of a scarce few outlying hamlets whose losses were confined to their herds and flocks.

In that disastrous year, the year of fire and blood, thanks to Serop's company, 27 villages of Akhlat were untouched by the massacre. Every time the Kurds pillaged an Armenian village, the afflicted Armenians appealed to Serop for protection, and Serop would go to their aid like lightning. The government could not figure out this extraordinary phenomenon, the Kurds would squeeze their stomachs like hungry wolves bemoaning their lost loot, while the Armenians blessed the name of Serop and, having lent wings to his reputation, worshipped him like a miracle-working saint. From that day they dubbed him "Aghbiur" which in the Armenian language means a fountain (fountain of blessings), a title which, on the lips of the people, assumed the proportions of a legendary hero. Men and women of all ages wanted to see this miracle man whose words carried the sanctity of an oracle for the peace and freedom loving Armenian people.

Serop not only fought with arms against the enemies of his fatherland, but he also waged active propaganda to arouse the consciousness of the people. He introduced organizations in the villages, and he took with him vitality, virility and self-reliance wherever he set foot. This peaceful clandestine activity provoked the malice of certain incompetent, jealous men who informed the government each step of the way, so much so the Kaimakam interrogated Serop's elder brother Mukheh, the village chief of Sokhort. Mukheh, however, assured the Kaimakam that his younger

brother had left the home town some ten years before, and according to his information, he had died in Russia some four to five years before, otherwise, he insisted, he would have written his family a letter once a year.

The Turkish government, of course, took no stock in such assurances, and, having pricked its ears like a bloodhound, and with the aid of informers, followed the progress of Serop each step with tense attention.

By this time Serop's fame had spread far and near as a popular hero. The brides and the girls of Village D . . . were wont to relate with adoration that "Aghbiur had severed the heads of seven Kurds with one stroke of his sword." According to another story, to escape capture from the Turkish soldiers, Serop hurled himself into the sea, and after swimming three days and nights, landed on the islands of Arder and Lim. These young brides and girls, like devout pilgrims, longed for the day when they could see Serop, ready to surrender half of their dowry to the name of Serop.

There was a large grain of truth, however, in these exaggerated tales woven with such lively and nostalgic imagination. One of his brave companions-in-arms, Dickran by name, would tell the following story about Serop.

"One night Serop, Simon and I were returning from the city, armed with nothing but our revolvers and daggers. Contrary to our custom, that day we did not carry our rifles. As we were about to pass the gate of Rahvah, on a small hill, suddenly we came face to face with seven Kurds armed with rifles. 'Who are you?' they challenged us, their fingers on the triggers. By the time I made a move to draw my revolver, suddenly I heard a piercing cry and a Kurd toppled at my feet. My first task was to draw my dagger and

cut off his head, when I noticed that Simon was doing the same thing. A couple of paces away, we did the same thing to a third Kurd. We dragged the bodies to the edge of the ravine to bury them under the sands. Serop rushed at us from a little distance and kissed us on the forehead. 'My braves,' he said, 'let me be a sacrifice unto your souls (the supreme affectionate expression of devotion), what would I have done if it were not for you?' The fact of the matter is, it was he who did every thing; we only buried the bodies."

This is why the girls of the village on the coast admiringly recounted that Serop had cut off the heads of seven Kurds with one stroke of his sword. The story of his swimming the sea for three days is drawn from the fact that Kourken's and Simon's companies, in their operations, had often resorted to swift transporptation by small boats.

"One day," another eye witness relates, "we were at the village of Sokhort when the Kaimakam came over with a company of 20-30 horsemen. We all tried to get out of the village but suddenly I was seized by a panic, thinking, since we were unarmed, we would be slaughtered like sheep by the Zabtiehs (gendarmes). I shifted my eyes to the tops of the mountains, the crest of the proud, snowcapped Sipan where the rays of the twilight were flickering. I took heart from the fact that darkness was falling which would enable us to change our position. Suddenly a panting messenger came from the village who told us that the Kaimakam had tied up Mukheh and would beat him up to make him confess. Serop's face became clouded and ripples like foaming sea were playing on his forehead. He ordered the company to withdraw, leaving behind only four of us. 'We must march on the village,' Serop said, 'come what will.' We laughed at this, we didn't have a solitary weapon with us.

Serop himself laughed. 'Bah,' he said, 'the matter of arms is easy. All I have to do is to cross myself at the rock and the rock will supply us what we want. Don't you know that, if God wants, he can provide bread from the stones and water from the rock?' Saying it, our miracle-working Serop, as the Armenian girls of the seacoast would say it, approached the rock with two companions, and chuckling loudly, crossed himself. The two husky braves pushed aside the rock, revealing a small entrance inside of which only one man could crawl through. The man who entered, started to hand out, one by one, the shrouded dead, while Serop and the other companion resurrected the dead - rifles with three bandoliers each. A moment later the rock assumed its normal position. We carried the weapons to the edge of the ravine where our companions were waiting for us. We were about to advance on the village when Serop's other brother and two honorable villagers came to beg Serop to desist from his intention of marching on the village, assuring him that they had appeased the Kaimakam and that he would leave the village in peace.

"Serop and his company were now free to enter the village and spend the night, but just then, the neighboring Kurds having killed a Turkish officer, the Alay Beg of Baghesh (Bitlis), had reached the vicinity of Sipan with a battalion of troops in quest of the bandits. Fearing that this might be an occasion for the Turkish army to attack Sokhart - especially since evil tongues ascribed the murder to Serop - the company decided to climb the Mount Neprovt (Nimrud) and spend the night in the open air. After a delicious meal of barbecue sandwiches, we set out for the mountain. Half way up we began to feel the chill, there were frozen snow mounds in spots in the ravines, while the open plain had a coat of two inches of grass. It was

so cold at the top of the mountain that we were forced to seek refuge in a cave. We built a good fire in the cave, and surrounding it, we started to talk and to discuss. Some of the men busied themselves cleaning and oiling their rifles, while others, in pairs, kept the watch over the outskirts. At dawn we came down to the bank of Lake Nimrud bathed in the sweet waters, then held a practice in marksmanship.

"That day I saw with my own eyes that Serop was an incomparable marksman, his aim never missed its mark. And I was ashamed of myself that I was only a teacher, a man used to pushing his pen.

"During these drills we heard the sound of a shot from the depths of the mountain, and not knowing the true cause, we instantly stood ready to meet whatever the contingency. Presently, one of the guards came in carrying a deer on his shoulders and offered it to Serop for the breakfast of his company. Serop not only did not accept the gift, but he called a council of his warriors to sit in trial over this undisciplinarian comrade. The brave hunter was Simon, Serop's dearest companion-in-arms, but Serop was relentless and demanded the extreme penalty for having jeopardized the lives of the company. Simon was a sergeant and had been decorated by the Jhair ARF Committee with the cross of honor. Serop stripped him of the cross and reduced him to the rank of a common soldier. He also placed him under confinement for one week. He wrote to this effect to the Jhair Committee.

"In a meeting, during the discussion Serop was gentle and patient like a lamb. He listened when they shouted in his face, or even when they raised a hand against him, but when it came to discipline, he was relentless, he did not even forgive his own brother. How many traitors and bad companions had been doomed by his inexorable verdict!"

Serop hailed from the Sokhort Village of Akhlat, a scion of the famous Khucheyentz family, a rich family dynasty of three hundred years. From olden times this family enjoyed a reputation for its hospitality and generosity, not only in Sokhort but in the entire province, both to the Armenians and the non-Armenians alike.

And now the heirs to this immense wealth were four brothers, of whom Serop was the youngest. The eldest brother Mukheh was the patriarch of the family and the whole village. Like his forefathers, Mukheh operated his own farms and his flocks.

Serop, as the youngest son of the family, was the most pampered. He was free to do whatever he pleased. Riding was his hobby from early childhood, he loved to go hunting in the mountains. After having spent a few weeks with the village priest to learn reading and writing, he took to the freedom of spacious nature, dedicating himself to hunting and acts of valor. He started his hunting profession with the village chicken which he felled with the sling and the bow and arrow. The villagers suffered at his hands, and the village brides pestered his mother each day with their complaints. The desperate mother would beat his son who would now run away into the mountains and would not show up for weeks.

When he grew a little older his elder brother Mukheh gave him a rifle and a dagger, in fulfillment of the patriotic poet's sound advice:

*When the little boy grows older,
Instead of toys and trinkets,
His father should put in his hand
A deadly rifle to play with.*

That day was the day of emancipation of the poor village chicken. Shouldering his rifle, Serop each day wandered in the mountain in his hunt for rabbits and deer. When he returned in the evening, he was

expected to bring with him a rabbit or a bird. One day the folk were made very happy when Serop brought home a wild deer, whereupon Mukheh made a gift to him of his colt. Serop now had all the accessories of his hunting career—a sword, a rifle, and an irrepressible colt like himself. In a very short time Serop trained his Bucephalus so that space was shortened before his lively adventures.

This went on until Serop was 21. At this time there arrived from Istanbul one of his uncles named Arakel who was wholly taken up with the nationalistic revival during the reign of Patriarch Nerses Vardjabedian. That day a new thorn was embedded in Serop's mind, or a new ray of light, when his uncle said to him: "Serop, true, you are a good hunter, you nail down your prey wherever you aim, yet it is not enough to hunt wild animals. That's too easy. Sometimes there are men animals who should be hunted down."

"If Armenia gains nothing from your arms, Fie upon thee and fie on your weapon."

Serop himself would relate that he owed the greater part of his revolutionary ideas to his dead uncle Arakel. Seeing, however, that his cousin was very reckless, his uncle married him off to tame him down a little. His marriage, however, was no obstacle to his love for hunting. Before his marriage he used to hunt wild game, after his marriage he started to hunt Kurds.

One day Serop got into a fight with two Kurds in the mountains killing one, while the other escaped. To save Serop from the vengeance of the Kurds and the government search, in 1891, his uncle smuggled him into Istanbul to work for another uncle.

Aghbiur Serop's activity had attracted the envy of the Kurdish Aghas as well as the government's attention. The latter wanted to remove such a potentially dangerous foe of the future. When Serop lost

his tracks, the Governor of Akhlat appealed to the Vali of Bitlis who, in turn, reported the matter to Istanbul. Thereupon the Istanbul police dogged him wherever he went. One day, while at work, two police officers caught up with him. To avoid alerting their quarry, the officers smilingly pretended to ask him a few questions, just as a matter of formality. They wanted to know what his name was and where he came from. Serop, however, would not give his true name.

"Aren't you Serop Vardanian?"

"No."

"Do not be afraid, nothing serious, if you are not him, please show him to us. Could be you know him. Rest assured that there's nothing to fear. We have some good news for this man."

After being rebuffed by his blunt answers, the officers left him. This, however, was enough for Serop to make a decision. And one day, before he was allowed to rot in a Turkish prison, without having achieved his aim, he left Istanbul through the services of a merchant and in 1892 he landed at the City of Sulina in Rumania where a considerable number of immigrant Armenians made their quarters.

A clever and industrious youth, Serop was never without a job. In a few months he opened a private club (coffee house), not with the intention of making money, but to keep himself busy. He knew well that his parents did not need his aid. As the club master, Serop was the life and the comfort of the Sulina Armenian colony to whom he preached unity and brotherhood. A little later he quit his coffee shop and opened a small restaurant. He closed this one, too, in the cholera of 1893.

The cholera dispersed the populace of the city, including the one thousand odd Armenian immigrants who, nevertheless, could not move because they had no passports. The consul of Sulina issued two

passports and then stopped, ostensibly because he had no more passports.

The cholera, on the other hand, was working havoc and the situation of the Armenians became desperate. Seeing the panic of his compatriots, Serop went to the consulate office and threatened to wreck the place unless the demanded passports were issued. He gave them a time limit of four hours. No man dared to defy this man who apparently had been fed on the bile of lions. Serop was not a man of long words. He spoke and struck in the same breath.

The desperate consul, in the absence of passports, invented a stratagem. He gave the Armenians each a piece of paper to serve as a visa. A few days later a Turkish liner offered free passage to all Turkish subjects who desired to return home. The city was emptied still Serop remained behind until the cholera stopped. In the fall of 1893 he left for Batum where, together with two companions, he lingered for a while until his chance came to enter Turkish Armenia. That was his intention when he left Sulina.

Soon after, they moved to Karin (Erzeroum) to work under the orders of the local ARF committee. The ARF committee at first did not think that this youth was capable of assuming perilous responsibility, and Serop, now desperate but never despairing, his love of the fatherland aflame in his breast, moved to the Caucasus to make his voice heard. Here he made the acquaintance of a Dashnak agent who recognized his merits and accepted him in his company of volunteers.

The ARF committee of the Caucasus ordered him to go through a period of training in the use of arms, but Serop had been an adept in this from his childhood. All he needed was to learn the use of rapid firing rifles which was a matter of two days at the most.

Wherever Serop went, his weapons were his inseparable company. "Boys," he was wont to say to his companions, "go without bread, but never without arms." Even the barbarian Kurds admitted that, no matter how far and how dark, you could never escape Serop Pasha's bullet.

After enlisting in the Caucasus fighting band, he never stood still. Fire and flame, he ran to and fro, distributing arms. He was constantly busy in the winter of 1893-94 organizing fighting bands, visiting places, and even penetrating his own home province incognito.

In the spring of 1894 Serop made several trips to Turkish Armenia, and in the summer he joined a fighting company on its way to Sassoun, but by the time the company arrived in the vicinity of Moush, Sassoun already had fallen. It was here that Serop finally decided to play a major revolutionary role. In the winter of 1894-95 he lingered in the Caucasus, but when the spring arrived he shed off the life of the wanderer and together with a few fellow warriors, entered Armenia, the land he worshipped, to give full flight to the revolutionary cause which he loved with all his heart and soul.

Serop's dream had now come true. After living the life of a wanderer for five years, now with a definite plan and with ripened and better organized ideas, he was in his homeland whose soil and the water attracted him. He chose for his headquarters the province of Baghesh (Bitlis) generally, and the region of Akhlat in particular. The government had long since forgotten the matter of the killed Kurds, but the Kurds remembered it as if it had taken place yesterday. All the same, Serop moved freely in the country for two years without inviting special attention upon himself.

The hopeful publicity centering on the Armenian question, the massacres, and the superhuman efforts of the Armenian revo-

utionaries had had considerable effect in shedding off the people's lethargy. Profiting from this awakening, Serop set to work on the propaganda activity with a strong measure of self-confidence. He traveled in Moush, Sassoun, Bitlis, Bulanik and the rest of the country, enlisting the patriotism of the young people and inspiring in them a fresh spirit. For long stretches of time, disguised as a Circassian, he made the rounds of the country, establishing ties and organizing committees.

Serop had the heart of a lion as well as a sweet tongue. Thanks to his agreeable and chivalrous disposition he became the worshipful idol of the people who always obeyed him. His authority was absolute in Akhlat, Bitlis and Bulanik. Former revolutionary agents had called the latter province "a living death, because no one had any success there. The shepherd understands the language of the shepherd, so goes the popular adage. This was the case with Serop who won the hearts of the young people with his enchanting tongue and with his shining *Mauser* rifle which the natives pronounced "Mavizar."

The same was true of Bitlis. Up until 1895 Bitlis had been regarded as a center of Jews of Armenia, but, after the 1896 massacres, under the influence of Serop and the hero Kourken, a formidable force came into existence which worried the government. The Governor of Bitlis came over personally to supervise the pursuit of Serop, as a result of which, there were long and futile searches. The despairing *Vali* no longer put faith in the word of informers, Serop's fame, on the other hand, put the fear of God in the hearts of the citizens, whereupon the defense of the city was entrusted to the Turks in the daytime, and to the Armenians in the night.

A few days later when police officer Fehmi Effendi was killed, not only the Turks but even the government officers

did not dare step out in the night, to make searches or to watch over the roads. The reaction to this was very striking; many proven reformers turned into zealous patriots and protected Serop to the limit.

Serop's activity in Akhlat was even more pronounced. There, all doors were open to him. The Kurds and a few traitor Armenians, however, were diligently busy gathering detailed information and conveying it to the government from day to day.

That summer the Kurds were frightened by the steady incursion of Armenian "*Djan Fedayis*" (freedom fighters). Fedayis from Russia sworn to avenge the massacre of their brothers from Sassoun were swarming all over, including the brave warrior who was universally known at the time by the name of "Serop of Sokhort." This was the way they reported it to the government which now intensified its searches. The Kurds, on the other hand, lived in terror. They never dared enter an Armenian village in two's or three's as they were wont to do before, freely exercising their immoralities and thieveries.

In the summer of 1897 Kurdish riders from Hasnan invaded the Armenian village of Teghoud and drove away their herds. Upon hearing it, Serop with four of his companions marched upon the Kurds to recapture the herd. A fierce battle ensued. Three of the Kurdish rustlers drove on the herd while the remainder of their companions held off the Fedayis, continuing the fight for six hours, late into the night. Due to their superior numbers, the Kurds succeeded in rustling the herd but they paid a heavy price for it in their dead and wounded while the Fedayis did not have a single casualty.

Serop with his small Dashnak fighting band had become the guardian angel of the Armenians and the *Azrael* of his enemies.

One day Serop's company camped near an ancient chapel named Holy Asdvadzdzin (Holy Begotten of God) above the Village of Sokhort. Suddenly they heard a great commotion in the plain below. Three Kurdish riders were rustling the herd of the villagers who had gone out to till their fields. Serop sent two of his men to call on the Kurds to surrender the herd, but the Kurds answered the summons with their bullets. The hard-pressed Fedayis called on Serop to hasten to their aid, whereupon, Serop emerged from his lair, took aim, and coolly shot off the fingers of the first Kurd's right hand. He then called on the Kurds gallantly, "I am Serop, I've cut off your fingers because you have dared fire on my soldiers. If you keep on resisting I will make all three of you food for Nimrud's birds this minute." And that was all. The Kurds left the herd and ran for their lives.

It was Serop's strategy, whenever he took action against his enemies to announce boldly: "I am Serop who is doing this thing. I am the only one who is responsible. Don't you dare touch the innocent people."

Aside from being an incomparable fighter, Serop was an organizer of exceptional ability. He not only organized fighting units with military training but he also tried to establish in the region where he operated a sort of autonomous administration. He created functioning bodies consisting of intelligent and competent individuals in every village of Akhlat, capable of adjudicating all social or political cases without resorting to the ruinous intervention of the government. They even settled criminal cases. Only in case of gravest law suits which the local (autonomous) authorities could not settle, the Bureau, or in local parlance the Central Council whose president was Serop, had the final verdict.

Matters advanced so far that no villager ever thought of appealing to the govern-

ment to seek justice in any case of litigation. Unity, cooperation and brotherly love were the customary climate in Akhlat. Disturbances and disorder were fast disappearing, the people were happy and content, free to enjoy the fruits of their labor thanks to the security which the Armenian revolutionaries had established, and in the face of which, even the enemies, now shame-faced and respectful, did not hesitate to express their sympathy and satisfaction, and when they had law suits they were ashamed to take it to the government. This was the general situation in Sassoun during the reign of Aghbiur Serop.

The administration of the province of Akhlat, thus, depended on Serop who governed the land through his personal visits and often with his correspondence. Serop had been illiterate in his childhood but during the years of his sojourn he had improved himself intellectually. He could write simple letters and cards which, after signing, he sealed with his silver signet ring initials of A. S. (Aghbiur Serop). He made it a habit to read newspapers and books which he criticised with his homespun yet serious observations. His opinion was respected by his intellectual fellow revolutionaries.

As time passed, the government circles became more and more concerned with Serop and his brave warriors. One day a government edict came from Istanbul ordering the arrest of this rebel Armenian, dead or alive. At first, the government was careful not to cause a big noise. Consequently, to avoid attracting the attention of European representatives (consuls), it organized a secret committee consisting of Armenians and Turks whose members were to tour the villages and obtain promises from the villagers that they would never give shelter to Aghbiur Serop nor ever to lend him any support.

When this effort failed, the government

now came out into the open and started to run down this company of Armenian braves who personified the inexhaustible virility of the Armenian revolution in our poor fatherland. These desperate persecutions gave rise to a number of encounters between the revolutionaries and the Turkish forces in which the Armenian freedom fighters brought to light their moral and military superiority.

Memorable among these encounters is the fight of October 20, 1898. That day Aghbiur Serop and 16 of his Fedayis were in Babshen (half an hour's distance from Bitlis), ready to move. Tipped off by some informers, the government immediately dispatched a company of soldiers encircling the village on all sides, including the neighboring hills.

Informed of the happening, Serop at once came out of his hiding place and ordered his men to take to the neighboring hills. Here, entrenched in their vantage positions, the Fedayis retaliated with a vigorous fire. The fight lasted for two hours, the Turks were pinned down to their positions, and the Turkish commander infuriated at his discomfiture, returned to the city to bring cannon and new reinforcements.

A general alarm was issued and the neighboring Kurds, even a part of the rabble, having seized whatever weapons they could lay hands on, raced into Babshen to arrest Serop Pasha. The Fedayis, however, soon put a damper in their ardor with their whistling bullets and the ensuing panic was formidable and ludicrous at the same time.

It was 6 o'clock when the roar of the cannon started to echo on the slopes of the mountains. The regular army troops fought furiously, constantly supported by fresh supplies of ammunition from the city. The Fedayis, on the other hand, concentrated their fire on the artillerymen, felling

quite a number of them, so much so no one dared to man the discharged cannon. The cannon, thus, was put out of the fight.

After a few futile attempts, the Turkish commander ordered his company to fire a volley, causing a terrific din. Meanwhile the artillerymen returned to reload the cannon. The cannon fire, however, shot over the heads of the Fedayis without causing any harm. The latter once again concentrated their fire on the artillerymen and felled four of them, one of whom, their chief, was held in high esteem before the government.

The Turkish commander, now bewildered and furious at sight of the impotence of his artillery, ordered his company to make a frontal attack on the positions of a handful of Fedayis. The first lines were mowed down like a scythe by the Fedayi fire, the remainder recoiled in panic, cursing their commander, and vowing in their hearts never again to march against the Fedayis.

The fight was continued now on long range between the besiegers and the defenders. The Fedayis, transformed into lions by the cheering words of their chief, were gay and care free, singing songs and firing away. About 10 o'clock an enemy bullet struck Sarkis of Bulanik in the head and this brave breathed his last without a sound. His companion notified his chief about it.

"I don't know what happened to Sarkis," he said, "I think he fell asleep."

"Let him sleep," Serop ordered, "you keep on fighting."

When darkness fell it was time for moving. The Fedayis were surrounded on all sides yet the enemy made his presence known by his wild cries at sight of the huge number of corpses. Serop assembled his warriors and silently slipped down one of the slopes, ready to cut their way through should they encounter Turks. The

enemy, however, kept firing away at the vacated positions, permitting the Fedayis to slip through the chain.

In this heroic encounter the Fedayi losses were, Sarkis of Bulanik, killed, and two others lightly wounded. The enemy loss was more than 30.

The day of the fight the mob of the city attacked the Armenian shops with the intention of looting. The Armenians resisted and sustained 32 casualties, two dead and thirty wounded. The government intervened and put an end to the disorder.

The encounter at Babshen put the fear of the Fedayi into the hearts of the Turks. The government redoubled the night guards, fearing Serop might attack the city in the night. The Armenians on the other hand, those who had been indifferent to the revolution, were filled with pride at sight of the exploits of Armenian freedom fighters.

The encounter at Babshen, a battle between a handful of Armenian braves and a regular Turkish army, lent wings to Serop's reputation and made his name respected. On the battlefield, where the range of the brave is his weapon (a classical Armenian adage), the Armenian Fedayis, with the loss of a single martyr, had pierced the enemy chain in the night and had made their way to freedom. As they kept on, they had the proud satisfaction of hearing a conversation of the Kurds: "Why should we risk our lives? Those who receive wages, let them go die for the Padishah."

The next morning, when the light dawned, the Turks were astounded and shame-stricken, seeing the hill was vacated and the birds had flown out of the cage. From that day, for the Turkish people, Serop became Serop Pasha. But the hero of Taron bitterly hated the title. "What?" he would ask, "we are fighting against the Pashas and the Aghas, and now I shall

become a Pasha?"

After this unique battle, seeing it was impossible to seize Serop who had shattered the honor of Turkish commanders and who had jeopardized his own position, the Vali (Governor) of Bitlis sent messengers to him, asking what he wanted, and second, requesting a special personal meeting with him.

Serop's answer was laconic, as was worthy of a formidable soldier like him. "Leave us to live in peace." He refused to meet the Vali.

The pathological arrogance of the Turkish government could not stand the shameful defeat of an army of 2,000 regulars and *bashi-bozuks* (rabble). It vented the fury of its barbarism and brutality on the home of Serop, forcing the pillage of its immense wealth, the sheep and the herds, and arresting Serop's eldest brother Mukheh who, after suffering unspeakable tortures in his prison cell, finally made his escape.

Mukheh's wife Dado, although finally escaped, nevertheless her body was covered with the scars of brandings with a hot iron, while Sose and Serop's brother Zakar fled to Sassoun and sought refuge with their husband and brother. Thus, the brave and heroic home of the Khucheyentz was scattered and found refuge in the inaccessible mountains of Sassoun to continue its existence in their lonely solitude under the protection of the lion-hearted Serop.

After the uprooting of his home, with an exemplary self-effacement, Serop was wont to say to his companions, "the lucky must weep at times, so that the unlucky may be comforted. See? Our home is an examples to you. First myself and then our home. I have ruined the great family hearth of Khucheh of Akhlat so that many mothers shall not have the right to curse

me saying, 'let his home be ruined who ruined our home'."

And really, this great family was not wholly detached during the activity of Serop. In the immaculate mountains of Sassoun where the winds were not yet contaminated by the breath of treachery, the government found a no-good informer, Aveh of Keghashen, who poisoned Serop. The immortal hero, now wholly exhausted, could not move.

The day after the poisoning, early at dawn, a large company of troops from Bitlis and Moush, led by Bshari Khalil Agha, came to Geliehguzan and surrounded the house in which Serop and his Fedayis were hidden. His Fedayis, eight in number, lifted his limp body and carried it out of the village. Yet, even in this condition, the immortal hero wanted to fight and sell dearly his life against the cowardly enemy. He begged his Fedayis to lay him against a boulder, give him his rifle, and then fend for themselves.

When they deposited his body against the rock, holding his rifle in his lifeless hands, he let loose a deep sigh which could have shaken the mountains of Sassoun. His peerless wife Sose stood beside him, like a protecting shield. Serop could not fire a single shot at the enemy, his bronze arms were so limp and powerless. He had been wounded in the leg and was still breathing when the enemy rushed him. They cut off his proud noble head and killed his two brothers, Mukheh and Zakar, and his son Hagop. They took away the hysterical Sose who had witnessed the horror of her loved ones. Four Fedayis fought their way to the hills. Having achieved his main aim, the enemy did not pursue them farther.

The day of Serop's martyrdom they also killed the priest of Geliehguzan and a number of the village braves. Having been taken by surprise, the village of Geliehguzan was scattered.

The Turks celebrated the event with great demonstrations. They took the head of Serop, as well as his widow Sose to Moush and Bitlis, making them a public exhibit before frenzied rioters. Soon after, Sose was released from prison, but Mukheh's wife, the brave Dado, succeeded in smuggling and rescuing Serop's two-year old infant son in that black hour.

Upon that cowardly murder in which the baseness of the Turkish character came to the fore Sultan Abdul Hamid, the bloody Sultan, decorated the authors of this cowardly treachery.

Both as an individual and public worker, Serop was fearless and impeccable. In him we find traits and passions of the chivalrous knight which are indicative of classical sublimity. He lived a clean life in whose pages we find many a prideful message for our national character.

Physically tough and durable, endowed with a noble spirit, he exercised a tremendous moral authority on those who knew him. His wandering yet dedicated life had welded in him an iron will, and he exercised his influence to make his companions models of true devotion, clean, selfless, and capable of sacrifices for the sake of the ideal. It was with this spirit that he preached and educated the people.

He glorified the love of the rifle—the weapon of defense. In his whole life of wandering, he never was separated from his favorite Maxim rifle. His companions-in-arms not only did not resent his stern discipline, but they saw in his sternness the radiation of a tender and brotherly love. They worshipped him and admired him for having chosen as his motto: "The weapon; liberty or death."

His incessant and relentless activity left bloody, but at the same time proud and glorious traces on the coming generation, especially in the Province of Taron. He became the founder of a school of legen-

dary heroes, such as Andranik, Artin, Kevork Chavoush, Magar of Sbaghan, Hampartzoum and many others.

Before the grave of the Giant of Nimrud, we can repeat with true pride before the whole world the immortal words of Shakespeare on the body of the noble and virtuous Brutus: "This was a man."

A few months after the death of Aghbiur Serop, a company of Fedayis entered the home of the traitor Aveh where his brother, his accomplice in the crime, was staying at the time. They lit the candles and started the questioning. Aveh stuttered, and after confessing the names of a few Armenian informers, he became tongue-tied. His body was riddled by 30 bullets, his son was left wounded and his accomplice brother was killed. This act of revenge, at once just and patriotic, was in keeping with the general sympathy of the people, causing universal rejoicing.

Another victim of revenge, placed on the grave of Serop, was Khalil Agha of Bishar, the ringleader of the massacre of

Sassoun, the notorious leader of the massacre of Sbaghan, and the leader of the force which destroyed Serop. He was the man who had made life miserable for the whole people of Sassoun and who had been decorated by Sultan Hamid for his crimes. In the fall, when he came to Moush, the Armenian Fedayis decided the time had come when they should settle their account with him. A company of thirty Fedayis led by Andranik, Magar of Sbaghan and Setrak, intercepted him together with eight policemen and three Armenian lackeys between the villages of Marnik and Havadorik. Khalil tried to escape but a vengeful bullet felled his horse. He tried to flee on foot and was overtaken by the Fedayis. When they caught up with him he was already tongue-tied.

After recounting to him his countless crimes, they tore off Khalil's medals, dispatched him there and then, and cutting off his head, as he had done to Serop of Sokhort, the Lion of Nimrud, they continued on their way.

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Dodge That Halo ... Pass The Praise

P. K. THOMAJAN

In this glamor-stricken, prestige-avid, recognition-craving era, aspiring personalities often resort to tactics that destroy their true selves.

They demand a right-of-way to their questionable destinations by loudly blowing their horn . . . seldom hesitating to run down those who get in their way.

Then on other occasions, they place considerable support on their slender perpendicular pronouns, to pole-vault to high places that are most precarious.

All this adds up to tension-charged pretensions, vacuous vanities that cause a person to gloat and bloat.

It also necessitates putting on a continuous "act" to justify attempts to remain in soul-searing spotlights.

Frankly, your so-called "big shots" with their brazen badges of "success" are men of the smallest calibre.

Your truly great man realizes that the moment he tries too vehemently to be "somebody" . . . he winds up as a dismal nobody.

A deep wisdom dictates a deferent policy of minimizing self and maximizing others. Your genuinely great man finds much solace and comfort in donning, whenever he can the cloak of anonymity and humbly merging with the mass of humanity, which is virtually nameless. But the very act of magnanimously forgetting self results in

certain natural laws to enter into operation, that cause him to be indelibly remembered.

Such a character reposes in the realization that we are all born with a god-given individuality which unfailingly declares itself when left untrammelled. He knows full well that vanity is a snare and a delusion, that laurels wilt and halos turn into zeros.

Like a great actor, when the time comes to take a bow, he embraces his entire supporting company, and becomes one with them.

And those, who would pinpoint all the credit on his performance, they are countered with the genial remark, "Anyone with a reasonable amount of intelligence could have done as much given the same circumstances."

The largesse of such a character is a perpetual benediction. By invoking communion of participation, he looms as one of God's gentlemen. Graciously, he prompts his associates to be ever mindful that Thine is The Real Power and The True Glory.

Such exalted meekness inherits all the bounties of this good earth and its spiritual collateral enjoys untold reserves endowing it with a sovereign influence.

This egoless, muted way of life subtly transmutes mere existence into a celestial symphony of grace notes.

● THROUGH THE AGES:

THE ART OF ARMENIA

*A chapter from the book The Art of Asia by Helen Rubisow
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●
HELEN RUBISOW

Armenia through the entire course of its history has been the focal point of conflict for many nations. Through it passed the routes of communication between the European states of the Black Sea basin and the lands adjoining the Caspian Sea, as well as between the Iranian plateau, Mesopotamia and Asia Minor. It was coveted by all: Assyrians, Parthians, Medes, Persians, Romans, Arabs, Turks, Russians. The rich valleys of Armenia lay open to invasion, and the peaceful agricultural population offered little resistance. They either bowed to the invaders or temporarily fled to the mountains where they found shelter with the warlike native tribes. These mountain-tribes prized liberty above everything else and did not bow to any authority; even if conquered, it suffered many blows, but fiercely preserved its spirit of independence and the stamp of its national individuality in art.

During the middle of the second millennium B.C. there existed in the region of Lake Van (now on Turkish territory) a coalition of states known as Nairi, which was a mighty rival of Assyria. The most powerful of its member states was Urartu,¹

also called Uruatri and Ararat, or Ararat of the Bible. It gave its name to the mountain on which Noah's Ark landed during the Deluge. But the inhabitants of Urartu called themselves "Chaldini," or "Chaldians," from the name of their chief Deity, Chald.

There is cuneiform inscription on a stone from the wall of the ruined fortress which still stands above the town of Nur-Bayazet, on Lake Sewan in Armenia, which reads:

"To God Chald, the Greatest Rusas, son of Sardur, says: The king of land, Ielikuhi, I have vanquished, have taken him a prisoner, have taken the land into my possession, have appointed here a ruler, have built gates to the God, Chald, and a mighty fortress, naming (it) the City of the God, Chald, of the Land of Biayna the Great..."² Biayna, the central part of Urartu was located around lake Van from which probably derived its name (Viayna).

The word "Urartu" appears for the last time in the Babylonian text of the Trilin-

whom they had a great deal in common, a non-Aryan people of the "Armenoid" type. Apparently, they had come from the West. Later, they became mixed with Indo-European tribes, the Phrygians, who came from Asia Minor, and the Cimmerians who invaded Urartu through the mountain defiles of the Caucasus about 714 B.C. Thus the modern Armenian came into existence.

² B. Pitrovsky, *Urartu, Drevneishee Gosudarstvo Zakavkazia*, Leningrad, 1939.

¹ In ancient Assyrian and Urartean inscriptions, the name "Urartu" is often applied to Nairi in its entirety, which allows us to conclude that it exercised a hegemony over the whole coalition. The Urartaeans were, like the Hittites with

gual inscription of Darius Hystaspes (521 B.C.) on the cliff of Behistun.⁸ The corresponding word in the Persian text is "Armina" (Armenia). In this inscription, Urartu-Armina is mentioned as one of the provinces of Persia.

Excavations in Toprak Kale, the site of the capital of King Rusas I (ca. 714 B.C.) near Lake Van, revealed the affinity of the culture of ancient Armenia with that of the peoples of the Aegean and Mediterranean basin. The glazed ceramics of Toprak Kale resemble the Cretan ceramics of the Early Ninoan period. Metal shields with representations of animals embellished the facade of the Temple of Chald in a manner reminiscent of Cretan usage.⁴ Much more superficial was the influence of its closest neighbor Assyria.

In Toprak Kale many metal objects of fine workmanship were found. Urartaeans were skilled in metal craft. When pressed by the invasion of the Phrygians,⁵ many Urartaeans escaped to the mountains, and there continued to practice their art. They were called "Chalybes, probably from the steel which they were the first to produce."⁶

Armenia's adoption of Christianity as the state religion in 301 A.D. under King Tiridates⁷ oriented the culture and art of the country westward, toward the Christian

world dominated by Byzantium. Armenians participated in the political life of Constantinople and rulers of Armenian origin sometimes occupied the throne of the Empire in Constantinople.⁸ Although later a considerable part of Armenia's population embraced Islam during the conquest of the land by the Turks,⁹ its culture and art still leaned toward Byzantium. In its turn, the complex and ancient culture of Armenia exercised a strongly Orientalizing influence upon Byzantine art forms. Strzygowsky maintains that even the Byzantine style of architecture was developed in Armenia, and he points out its influence upon the architecture of Europe of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.¹⁰

The architecture of Armenia is enhanced by sculptured bas-reliefs of figures, animals and plants, the chief decoration of the facades of churches. Elongated, highly ornamental and richly decorated crosses are a prominent feature of the sculptures of these facades; they also appear on tomb stones together with other sculptured decorations and on rectangular stone slabs placed at converging crossroads.

Monumental painting and mosaics were highly appreciated in Armenia as we know from its literature, for only scattered fragments remain. In the seventh century Vrtanos K'ert'ogh wrote a treatise against the Iconoclasts in which he sums up the position of painting: "All that the holy scriptures relate is painted in the churches."¹¹ The historian, Thomas Ardzruni, in describing

Persian rule, established Christianity as the state religion. In this act, Tiridates anticipated Constantine.

⁸ Thus, the rulers of the "Macedonian" dynasty of the ninth century were of Armenian origin.

⁹ Arabs conquered Armenia for the Caliphate in 654; the Seljuk Turks, in 1064 (the fall of Ani); the Ottoman conquest took place about the middle of the sixteenth century.

¹⁰ Strzygowsky, *Die Baukunst Der Armenier Und Europa*. Vienna, 1918.

¹¹ It is interesting to note that the Armenian Church had its own iconoclasts long before Byzantium. See Sirarpie Der Nersessian, *Armenia*

³ See Chapter on "Persian Art."

⁴ Many decorative and symbolic motifs of the Urartaeans also correspond to the motifs of archaic art of Greece, as well as the Etruscans. For instance, legs of the candelabrum found at Toprak Kale are composed of heads of animals from whose mouths grow the members of other animals. This "zoomorphic juncture" is a characteristic of the art of Urartaeans and Etruscans. C. F. Lehmann-Haupt, article on Urartu in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 14th edition, 1929, p. 891.

⁵ The Phrygians, "Freemans," as the Greeks called them, were in the ninth century B.C. the masters of the Aegean sea. Greek traditions assert that they came from Macedonia and Thrace.

⁶ C. F. Lehmann-Haupt, *op. cit.*

⁷ King Tiridates was converted to Christianity by Gregory, the Illuminator in the end of the third century. Armenia was the first country which, in place of Zoroastrianism imported under

ing the wall painting in the palace of King Gagik on the Island of Aght'amar, on Lake Van, mentions the representation of a "gilt throne on which the king is seated in gracious majesty surrounded by young pages with resplendent faces, by groups of musicians and marvelous maidens. There are also groups of men with drawn swords; wrestlers fighting each other; lions and other wild animals; and birds with varied plumage.¹² In the churches were wall paintings, belonging probably to the tenth century, still are to be seen in the Church of Aght'amar. Fragments of painting remain in several seventh century churches in Talish, Talon, Mren, Tekor. Paintings were also found in the ruins of Ani, "the City of Thousand-and-one Churches" which was Armenia's capital in the tenth and eleventh centuries, during Bagratid dynasty.

If little remains of Armenia's monumental mural painting we are fortunate in having excellently preserved examples of its miniature paintings, for the small transportable manuscript could easily be hidden and had a better chance to survive the ravages of war. Richly decorated Armenian manuscripts, usually of the Four Gospels, are preserved. The earliest among them belong to the ninth century.

By the tenth century Armenian manuscript painting had reached a high point of development. Two artistic styles, reflecting two tendencies, are distinguishable: the first is connected with Greco-Byzantine tradition, the second with the cultures of the Orient, Syria, Sassanian Persia, and Central Asia.

The Etchmiadzin Gospel of the year 989, is an example of the first tendency; and the Gospel of the year 966 in the Walters

Art Gallery in Baltimore is a good example of the second, Orientalizing style of the Armenian manuscripts. However, whether one or the other tendency prevails, both are usually present in Armenian manuscripts, often harmoniously blended together. Animal motifs traceable to Oriental art, geometric patterns, and lively floral motifs, appear together in ornate compositions. In some instances figures of the Apostles and Saints were added.

Armenian ornament no doubt exercised a strong orientalizing influence on Byzantine art. It is through the work of Armenian artists that many oriental especially Sassanian, motifs and forms reached Byzantium, and later Medieval Europe.

Manuscript art in Armenia reached its apogee in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, during the lifetime of two celebrated miniaturists Toros of Taron (who worked in the monastery of Gladzor in Siunik Province) and Sargis Pidzak from Cilicia.

When, about the middle of the sixteenth century, the Ottoman power overtook Armenia, many of her artists left the country. While these Armenian artists carried their art abroad, to Northern Persia, or to the European countries, in turn their work was influenced by Western Art.

European tendencies began to penetrate into Armenia. Copies and imitations of European painting and etchings began to appear and Armenian art passed through a phase of Europeanization, shared by every Asiatic nation at one time or another to a greater or lesser degree.

Contemporary Armenian artists, like M. Sarian, A. Mamadzhanian, A. Kodjoian, and others, participate in and contribute to the art of the European International School of the twentieth century. The majority of the artists of Armenia, a Republic of the Soviet Union since 1920, belong to this movement.

and the Byzantine Empire, p. 110 f., and the foreword to that book by Henri Gregoire.

¹² Ibid.

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● PART I:

Songs of Ovajik

AHARON DADOURIAN



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Our Village of Ovajik, the home town of the poet Aharon, author of this beautiful poem which he called ZIUMBIUL, was a little Armenian town of approximately 500 families, perched at the skirts of a high hill overlooking the beautiful Bay of Ismidt to the north. To the west of Ovajik was another Armenian town, much larger, and equally beautiful in point of location, called Bardizag, a distance of two hours travel by foot. To the east of the village loomed a long range of towering mountains at the base of which, for long miles, meandered a beautiful stream of clear waters. The low valley through which the river ran was a vast orchard of cherry, apple, walnut, quince, pear and luscious fig trees, all the property of the villagers. The natives called this vast valley Moria, the incomparable Moria of Ovajik.

The word OVAJIK means a little OVA, namely a little plain. It got this name from the fact that the immediate area which surrounded the village was a plain of considerable size, extending as far as the Bay of Ismidt (Nicomedia), consisting of orchards, vineyards, parcels of land for the culture of tobacco and mulberry trees, the latter the main source of the silk industry. Small companies of the villagers daily trekked to the City of Ismidt to sell their charcoal, wood and fuel for fresh fish and groceries.

The people of Ovajik lived a patriarchal life, with strict family standards, and preserving the pristine virtues of obedience to elders, mutual respect and love. They were industrious. (nearly every one independent), religious, and great lovers of learning. They were a happy people, hospitable, generous hearted, and progressive.

That Ovajik is no more. The Turks destroyed it in the Armenian deportations of 1915.

In the years of 1898-1900 our village of Ovajik went through a great intellectual awakening. There came to our village a great educator named

Krikor Effendi Haroutunian who took charge of our school. Born in Shabin Karabissar (interior of Anatolia), Krikor Effendi was graduated from Berberian College of Istanbul and had served as superintendent of Armenian schools in Adapazar and Sivribissar. At the time he was called to our village he was professor at the American High School in Bardizag.

The Armenian school of Ovajik was not based on the American pattern of the high school. It only included the two upper classes: Junior and Senior. The rest of the educational groundwork was laid in the elementary system. When Krikor Effendi became Superintendent, the upper class had 8, and the lower class 14 students, all males, because the coeducational system had not yet been introduced in Ovajik. One of the pupils of the upper class was a youth named Sarkis Silo-yan (now changed to Selian), a brilliant student who later played an important role in the continued intellectual revival which followed. Upon his graduation in 1900, he immediately joined his alma mater as assistant superintendent to his teacher.

In 1901 Krikor Effendi was called to Sivribissar to take charge of the local schools, and he was immediately succeeded by his pupil, now Sarkis Effendi Silo-yan. Happily, it so turned that the pupil not only was the equal of his teacher but he was even better. At least he accomplished for Ovajik what his distinguished teacher had not had time to accomplish. He completely revolutionized the educational system of Ovajik, forced the school board to raise the pay of the teachers, introduced many reforms, and extended the range of education to include the rich and the poor alike.

All fourteen of the class of 1901 which graduated under Sarkis Effendi later became distinguished professionals—doctors, pharmacists, civil administrators, teachers and successful business-

men. One of these graduates was a romantic youth named Abaron Dadourian. Abaron early showed poetic inclinations and when his early offerings were accepted by the papers, he now devoted his full time to his chosen field of poetry.

At the end of 1902 Abaron went to Venice to continue his advanced education at the Mekhitarist Institution. Later he went to Prague as one of the 50 Armenian students selected by Prime Minister Alexander Khatissian to study at the University at the expense of the Government of the Independent Armenian Republic of 1918-20. Upon the Soviet takeover of Armenia he settled in France where he still lives, having given his time to teaching in Armenian schools and writing poetry. He is the author of two volumes: *SOS-YATZ ANDAR* (Forest of Plane Trees) and *MAKAGHATNER* (Scrolls). His teacher, Sarkis Selian (Silayan) is a pharmacist, and now the owner of *Pharmacie L'Aurore* in Aleppo, Syria.

In this poem, "Songs of Ovajik," a part of *The Scrolls*, the Poet Abaron has immortalized the folk songs of his village centering on the person of the legendary village belle, the incomparable beauty known as ZIUMBIUL. Convention in Ovajik forbade the young people, boys and girls, seeing one another in public (all marriages being contracted through the mediation of match makers), but on holidays and festive occasions, such as weddings (wedding celebration in Ovajik lasted fully one week in festivities), New Year, Easter, and local saints days, the young people came together in open air gatherings and danced their solo dances, duo dances or circle dances to the accompaniment of the crude village orchestra which consisted of a clarinet, a violin and a lute, or pipe and a drum, or even at times a simple Scottish bagpipe, and the village braves,

now intoxicated with the wine, danced like Dev-rishes, singing the praises of the incomparable Ziumbiul, which was a subtle method of conveying their messages to their admiring sweethearts on the sidelines who cheered them on with their adoring eyes and enthusiastic handclapping.

In these "Songs of Ovajik" the poet Abaron has completely recaptured the spirit of one of the most beautiful social strains in the saga of our modest little village of Ovajik. He is completely intoxicated with his love for Ziumbiul, the peasants' conception of superlative and overpowering beauty. Like the BULBUL of immortal Hafiz, he warbles endlessly to his love the rose. The enthusiasm which wells up in him like an inexhaustible spring of clear waters is so simple, so genuine and so authentic. There is no end to his similes and his metaphors, his ability to create a million perspectives and prisms from which angles to view this wonder of the universe which is called love. He infects the reader with his own enthusiasm, his zest for living, his worship of the beautiful, his love for Ziumbiul.

This is the Ziumbiul of Ovajik. One can never savor the taste of the original Armenian in which the poet wrote by reading a translation. I have done my very best to stay close to that original, and I have even managed to preserve the meter, and wherever possible, something of its Armenian flavor. Yet, even if it falls so short of the intoxicating quality of the original, poor and inadequate as it is, this translation into English of a beautiful poem might serve to give the reader a remote idea of the sort of songs which the natives of our incomparable little Village of Ovajik sang and which, a great and understanding poet, has immortalized in his imperishable love for Ziumbiul.

JAMES G. MANDALIAN

Song of the Wine (PRELUDE)

My jug of wine th'other day
Fell from my hand and shattered.
Shattered my jug O so rare,
Fell and turned to clay again.
And I, know this, th'other day
Opened the doors of my heart
And mourned my loss in my hut
For long three days and three nights.

I took my jug lovely 'nd fair
To the potter to repair.
"I broke my wheel yesterday,"
Potter told me mournfully.
I took my jug unto God
To put the pieces together.

God was trembling all over,
He was too old to discern,
Too old to see land or sky.

Now seated beside the road
I ask all the passersby,
"Dost know a master potter
Who will repair my jug fair?"
They stare at me impishly,
Playful smiles on silent lips,
"You foolish boy, can't you see?
You're standing beside him?"

Fortune teller came this eve
Decked with rings and ruddy beads,

"Take your jug to your lover,
Your broken jug with your tears.
Take your jug to your lover,

Your love will mend it" she said.
'Gainst petal lips of your jug
Vainly bleeds your little heart.

Ziumbiul

In our backyard shadows fall,
In the shadow's a plum tree,
The falling plum let not roll,
My lovely one's bosom fair
Let the plum fall, nestle there.
At eventide from the tree
I shall pluck it with kisses.
In our backyard the plum tree,
Bury the plum in my soul.

In the twilight my lovely,
Lovely hair strewn to the winds,
My lovely one stands there
Beside the tall tow'ring tree,
Her lilting song to the winds.
My love has come this morning,
Shooting the plums right and left,
With rosy cheek and red lips,
She shoots the plums right and left.

Unable to stand longer
Down did I shake the plum tree,
Down came the shower of plums.
Let my love take the plums home,
Her home a wedding feast for me.
I shall go to my love's home,
I shall gather the plum there,
Drunk am I since yesterday
Drunk from the scent or the hue.

The plum falls down let it roll
Inside the blouse my fair one,
Morning and eve my shoulder
Let my fair one rock and roll.
In our backyard there's a plum tree,
Fain would I die under its shade,
Ziumbiul, my love, you bite the plum
Your bite waken me from my wound.

In our backyard an acre of wheat,
The wheat is cloyed with the earth.
Word did I send to the village,
My love was stripped of her veil.
Seven fair ones I found for me,
All seven with raven hair,
Holding seven feathery sickles
In seven hands lilly white.

Only one of seven maidens
Harvests my heart all day long,
Pretending to reap the wheat stalk
She drains the blood from my heart.
Ah heartless wench, enough,
Heed me for a fleeting span,
Lest you fall sick in the morning
And fail to harvest my wheat.

In my backyard an acre of wheat,
Seven fair maids are reaping.
Seven days yet they aren't through,
The world's consumed by the flames.
I've repented, good brothers mine,
Let the field and crop be yours,
When you've reapers so lovely fair
Trifling with death, you beware.

There's only one in the seven
Who reaps my heart all day long,
Her fingers steeped in the Henna,
Her sickle harvests the red blood.
Her lone pretext is the lush field
Yet it's my heart she uproots.
Pity O Lord, hearken my cry,
Save my poor field of its pain.

Our home your home sweetest my love
Stand there erect face to face,

Sirma* the walls sirma the doors,
 Brocades of silver and gold,
 Your house came down sweetest
 my love,

While ours stood there all erect.
 And now you stand there all alone,
 Golden brocades clinging tight,
 You mourn the loss of your home.

Your house came down dearest my love,
 Whilst ours stood there all erect.
 My hand a golden girdle
 'Gainst your slender waist I'll make,
 Come O come, I've opened for you
 Roses fair and silken walls,
 My heart is a golden mansion,
 Countless maidens at my feet.

I've strewn my home with musks,
 A purple sea in the musk,
 Fragrance by day, the sea by night
 Will lull you to sweet slumber.
 A fisherman fain I would be
 To catch you in my golden net,
 You will love me, my fairest one,
 Love me truly so fiercely,
 Never to leave me again.

A dusky swallow I will be,
 Into a mad hen I'll turn,
 Morning and eve I will scurry,
 Steal the clay from black mountain,
 I'll build a mansion for you,
 Sirma walls and sirma doors,
 A paradise against mine.

A bird of the sky fain would I be,
 Swiftly to fly to your side,
 Perch in your hair and to build
 A golden nest for my home,
 A golden nest I would build,
 Singing my sweet melodies.

At the base of yonder mountain
 You and I living all alone,
 You and I all by ourselves,

I would suffer from the hunger,
 You from the lack of sleep,
 Fain would I feast on your cheeks.

Fain would I perch on your brow,
 Looking down into your eyes,
 With my tears a string I'd weave,
 Weave a string with my tears,
 To plunk it over your heart,
 To pluck it o'er your heart,
 Rustling the leaves of autumn.

Roses I've plucked by the sieves,
 I've laid them down in the dew,
 Dew has lifted light has come,
 My love's kissed them with shivers,
 My love's scarf whipped by the wind,
 Whips against the foaming sea.
 My love comes wrapped in the rays,
 I'm a candle in the sun.

I'll take my roses to the shade
 Lest roses wilt in the sun.
 My love will be angry with me,
 Roses and spring they will droop,
 My love will be angry with me,
 Will beat me with the wilted rose.
 I'll let her pluck my heart
 To replace the roses red.

Let her take away my heart,
 Hang it from the garden wall,
 When the sun has lifted the dew,
 Let her water it with her tears,
 Let her make love her needle,
 My heart the velvet pillow,
 My heart's pierced with many wounds,
 My heart a bleeding trellis.
 Seven moons late from the town
 Let her bring back my bleeding heart,
 While bringing back my bleeding heart
 Her fingers washed with the dew,
 A sprinkler I'll make of my heart,
 To water the wilted rose,
 'Gainst the blown rose of my love
 I'll unearth the buried bait.

* Sirma means a silver or gold brocade.

I've a wedding, fetch the torch,
 Let the moon lend its luster,
 Seven mountains and behind,
 Let the light race, penetrate,
 Meet my love in silver drapes,
 Let the red torch give a kiss
 To the hamlet of roses;
 Let the silver moon lend a steed
 To my love who comes to me.

Gather the torch from the mountains,
 Ignite the torch from the stars,
 The torch burns but ne'er expires,
 Unite my heart to the torch.
 Seven mountains seven hills,
 The mountain's heart is burning,
 My love's coming to my home,
 Let not the gold on the road
 Extinguished be in the dark.

Six mounts I crossed came the seventh,
 Lightning has struck burning torch,
 Seven mountains seven springs,
 Carry water to my love,
 My love's lying sick in bed,
 Red ribbons woven in her hair,
 Her hair is strewn on her side,
 The groom stands on seven mountains,
 Thinking the moon is his bride.

I harnessed the sun to my cart,
 Four fiery balls to my cart,
 Morning is far and my cart
 Rolls and trundles in the dark.
 Vineyards fair are clad in green,
 Red and purple drape the road,
 My little town dressed in white,
 Eyes gilded with mascara.

On the road I greeted none,
 Opened my heart to no one,
 My love's apple in my belt,
 I did not bite until morn.
 Let wagging tongues torment me
 "Again he goes to his love,
 Forty days since the last trip,

E'er the new year's half over."

Suns I harnessed to my cart,
 Four fiery balls to my cart,
 To the four wheels of my cart
 I tied the songs of my love.
 My cart I load with bounties,
 Cherries, apple honeydew,
 My load's so heavy, sweet my love,
 That's the reason I am late.
 Saint Elijah breezes has,*
 Perched across the gentle bay,

Saint Elijah orchards has,
 An open door at the base,
 Inside the door lies Ziumbiul,
 Ziumbiul with her cheek exposed,
 Pearls have sprouted from her eyes,
 Saint has stolen half the pearls.

Ziumbiul you have slept enough,
 The sun is down from the clouds,
 The sun has crept in the door,
 Has stolen a kiss and expired.
 He cried, from you a spark begged,
 From your rose bush he was lit,
 Light of my life 'gainst the sun,
 Expired the wink of your eye.

Ziumbiul has come all alone,
 She calls me from far away,
 Lit in the eye of the Saint
 Is love's tulip heavenly.
 Should I rise and pluck the flower
 I shall sin against the Saint,
 If I vanquish not the Saint,
 Impale myself 'gainst the sun.

I made a vow at the shrine,
 A red rooster slaughtered I,
 Sacrifice to Saint Elijah,
 On the doorstep of the shrine.
 I painted a cross on the rock,
 A king's image did I paint,
 I dipped my finger in the blood,

* Saint Elijah was the patron saint of Ovajik, perched on a hill of the same name, rising from the left bank of the river, overlooking the Bay of Ismidt.

Painted the cross in red blood.
 Dipped my finger in my blood,
 Ziumbiul your name I inscribed.
 Pilgrims calling at the shrine
 Kneel and kiss the cross of blood,
 Your sweet slumber my Ziumbiul
 Sings the rooster's lullaby.
 Let each calling pilgrim there
 Read the inscription of your name,
 Inscribe your name on a scrap,
 Longings of weary men soothe.

Ziumbiul on your somber tomb
 A marble cross they erect,
 Village brides made a solemn vow,
 They drew a sigh from my heart,
 With the scarlet of my heart
 My name on it did they inscribe,
 A lamp they hung on the cross,
 My tears for the sacred oil,
 To keep the flame undying.

Ziumbiul whither in the sun,
 Whither goest from my side?
 Moria is full of roses,
 The dew is on the roses,
 Sun the *Derundas** of the dew,
 The Bulbul pecks at the dew,
 Its bill has painted silver,
 Early morning to his mate
 Bulbul pours his lilting song,
 Sings my reproach to my love.

Cherries grow at Moria,
 Cherry trees reach the high hill,
 A maiden fair under the tree,
 Her hand reaches to her love,
 She reaches out to the branch,
 Picks the cherries one by one,
 Her bosom's flame all day long
 My tortured heart sets afire.

* *Derundes* is the popular distortion of *Diarn-undarach* (Candlemas) — the Feast of the presentation of the blessed Virgin Mary. At this festival the natives of Ovajik build fires in front of each house or in every street. The lads in the village afflicted with illness were made to leap over the fire, the assumption being that they would be healed.

Every Sunday Ziumbiul dear,
 The boys come down from the fields,
 Waists encased in sashes white,
 They dance and dance merrily
 Round and round under the tree.
 Like fish poisoned by the bait,
 They're strewn on the sea sand,
 Blasted by the dazzling fire
 Of your Sunday apron red.

Ziumbiul whither in the sun,
 Saunter in your raiment white?
 With your dainty shapely feet
 Fragrance you lend to the rocks.
 Ziumbiul on this the Lord's day
 You race down the Moria way,
 In your eyes stream have I fallen,
 Maid, it's with me you speed on.

Halt, caravan, word with you,
 I've many things to tell you,
 My love was lost on this road,
 My soul's empty and I bleed,
 My love had jet jet black eyes,
 Long and flowing raven hair,
 The raven hair rippling down
 Ripples with soft coquetry.

Hundred camel caravan,
 Hundred loads of yellow gold,
 Stood beside the cool waters,
 Crystal waters of the spring,
 Beside the marble basin.
 From the depths the yellow gold
 My love's smile to me relayed,
 Hundred camel caravan
 Left me without an answer.

Caravan, lo hundred camels,
 Hundred loads of gold I give,
 As you trek the distant steppes,
 I throw in mountain and breeze,
 When you pass by native home
 A loaf from my oven I give,
 The camel bearing my love
 A star studded rein I give.

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Carvan, did'st thou see my love?
 Her eyes Hennaed with the tear,
 Etched with the fiber shadow
 Of the slender erect cane?
 The caravan departed,
 The carvan made no reply,
 With the carvan golden load
 Departing lad ne'er returned.

My father's home is afire,
 Sky and earth a lurid red,
 The whole town's come to my home,
 Founts of water they have brought,
 The river did not suffice,
 They brought water from the sea,
 Oceans could not stop the fire,
 The fire devoured the whole world.

In the big hall the big men
 This day a council they held,
 Throngs of men and women fair
 Sounded the golden trumpets:
 What's the big secret, O God!
 The whole village is on fire,
 The fire couldn't be extinguished,
 The world's waters are consumed.

There is a house near my home,
 Ziumbiul weeps there all alone,
 Dip a finger in the tear
 A tiny drop on the tip,
 Drop the tear drop on my house,
 The drop will extinguish the fire,
 Water, I kneel and kiss thee,
 May your spring cool ever be.

Up the slopes of Djordedeh¹
 The trail's rocky, Ziumbiul dear,
 My love an apple has sent me,²
 Apple studded with the clove,

The apple's heart she has pressed,
 'Gainst the heart of her lover.

Hast seen a weeping apple,
 Soft bosom pierced by the clove?
 I can't return to my home,
 Blood and tears inside the shack,
 The apple's jelled into love,
 Has given heart to my love,
 My white steed has whipped a sweat,
 Chafing in his eagerness
 To carry her on his back.

Apple, do not sigh sadly,
 I will send you to my love,
 Of your heart's clove I will weld
 A ploughshare unto my heart.
 Apple your shrine you shall reach,
 Cuddle in my love's bosom,
 You, too, alas, are burning
 By the fire that consumes me.

Musk and incense you bring me,
 From the bosom of my love,
 With your ruddy tiny feet
 The musk's perfume you bring me;
 As I kiss your tiny feet
 Longing for my love I sate,
 From the red strands of your brow
 My heart's Narod I shall weave,*
 Sacred knot of nuptial vows.

On the face of Mendz Aghbiur,
 Village fount of cool waters,
 Ziumbiul they wrote black letters,
 The basin from which you drank
 They filled with lime and ashes,
 Village women in the morn
 Came and read the black letters,
 Gossipmongers evil men
 Guffawed at the market place.

Ziumbiul has committed a sin,
 She has slept in her lover's arms,

¹ Djordedeh is one of the hills rising on the slopes of Ovajik.

² On the eve of their wedding, the girls of Ovajik, in the form of invitation, sent apples studded with clove stalks and wrapped in colorful tinsel to their fiances, relatives, friends and acquaintances.

* Narod is a red ribbon which the priest used as a part of the wedding ceremony. He tied a Narod each to the forehead of the bride and the bridegroom as a symbol of union and eternal loyalty.

Simple-minded she has been,
 She has beguiled the serpent,
 Ziumbiul at once has gone mad,
 Strangled her love with her hair,
 At the passerby stranger
 She has sworn on the Bible.

Twin basins of Mendz Aghbiur
 Twin faucets drained the water,
 The spring with the cruel town
 Is sullen for seven days;
 Black hands inscribed a black sin
 On the face of village spring,
 In the font of marble white
 A dark gash they made by night.

Ziumbiul committed no sin,
 Opened the hive of her heart,
 The artless fly fell inside,
 Entangled in the honey,
 The fly did not die nor fled,
 His wings impaled he lies there.
 Ziumbiul open not your heart,
 Ziumbiul committed no sin.

At eventide the dusk fell,
 Ziumbiul I lit thee a fire,
 On the crest of Hamza Dag*,
 Clove and lilly did I sow,
 The fire I built shot afar,
 Saint Elijah set afire,
 With its vibrant crimson wings
 The sun wrapped your pavilion.

Your tent was drunk from the sun,
 In its bare feet struck a dance,
 The wine pushed a jeweled ring
 On the finger of the shrub;
 From pointed peak of your tent
 A tiny drop trickled down,
 Rolly polly the drop rolled,
 Till it rested in your eye.

My life a boon to your eye,
 Black as midnight lustrous eye,

* Hamza Dag is a well known mountain of
 Ovajik to the right of the river, facing the Shrine
 of Saint Elijah.

I'll make the fire my charger,
 Fiery steed with fiery mane,
 I'll come and squeeze the wine
 From your half open eyelids,
 Without your knowing, know this,
 My heart to thine I will press.

Ziumbiul rose up saw the light,
 Her body exhaled the rose,
 The light was not of the sunrise,
 She set a trap in my heart,
 Ziumbiul stared far, far away,
 Laughed and fell into deep sleep,
 My soul clutched in her two hands,
 Expired for her mother's sake.

My love's lying under the tree,
 Ziumbiul's laid her bosom bare,
 Lined her bosom with the curves
 Of the warrior rider's trail.
 O rider why weepest thou?
 The naked sword on your side,
 Whither has fled your grim foe?
 How come your sword is shattered?

Good friend, under the lush tree
 I tied my steed to the branch.
 My love's lying under the tree,
 Her breasts exposed I mistook,
 A leaf has fallen from the tree,
 Nestled on her bosom bare,
 Golden hues of golden leaf
 Shroud the bosom of my love.

O rider go shoe your horse,
 Go repair your shattered sword,
 With its shadow down the trunk
 The tree will write your love's tale;
 Your love will then in the shade
 Turn into a silver stream,
 The stream with silver sandals
 Your loyal squire shall become.

Good friend I have shoed my horse,
 My broken sword did repair,
 Opened the door of the moon
 Peeping from my love's bosom,

I seized my love under the tree,
Hoisted her on my charger,
I raced my steed up the hill,
Plucked my fruit from the tall tree.

Ziumbiul come let's go to sea,
Is yon craft a ship or raft?
My love is in the white ship,
Her white blouse is the ship's sail,
Her white hands are the ship's oars,
Her raven hair the ship's rudder,
The moon a mast she has made,
My love is sailing the sea.

My love Ziumbiul turned to snow,
Laden ship with white cargo,
She has stirred the deep blue sea,
Foam and water forced to cry.
As love whither hast thou fled?
You have fled from the blue sea,
The weeping moon of my soul
From the bleak wind you have hung.

Ziumbul you have locked my heart,
Tell me where the key you hid?
When you landed the white isle,
A sword you made from the thorns,
Pierced the red sea of your breast,
And now like Pharaoh the king,
Lost am I in endless sea.

I will build a tower high,
Taller than the highest hill,
A marble tower I will build,
At the base of the mountain.
My tower shall have no windows,
Lest the moon 'tempt to peer in,
My tower shall have no doors
Lest beggar wind sneak in.

Inside a small golden lamp,
A small golden lamp will burn,
A small silver lamp to glow,
Dim light will not extinguish,
Inside the soul of my lamp,
Outside the pine of the lake,
Locked in embrace, Ziumbiul dear,

They'll sway between you and me.

Ziumbiul in a white canoe
My white lover let us fetch,
Inside the gateless tower,
Torture her for forty days;
Let her weep inside the tower,
God have no pity on her,
The moon like a naughty boy,
Laugh and mock her from above.

Ziumbiul once we jail my love,
How shall we make our escape?
Inside I have lit a hell,
From which furnace to emerge?
Maiden, I have deceived you,
I made a tower of my heart,
My heart the tower, you the captive,
Silver lamp I lit inside.

O wayfarer whither bound?
With limping feet to the shrine?
I have a tree near my home,
A camel tied to the tree;
Release the camel from the tree,
Mount my old dromedary,
Once you mount my camel lame,
Sniff the script I handed you.

Brother dear, with limping feet
From the seven hills I come,
Seven valleys seven springs,
From seven gates have I come.
What need have I of camels,
I can wade the rivers deep,
Should the river carry me,
Still I shall unharmed be.

O wayfarer you are hurt,
Your heart carries a deep wound,
In your wound the deep river
Winding traces it has left.
Let me race down the river,
Take a message to your love,
Pales of water let me fetch
To marble font where you rest.

Brother dear the river
From my deep wound has sprung,
Each day it has seen its love,
Serenely flowed from sheer joy;
Failing to find its lover,
Waters have turned into mire.

My heart a lamp did I shape,
I took the lamp to the church,
Of my heart a wick I wove,
My tears for the holy oil.
The wind wafts the little light,
Little light return to church,
Mother of God before thee
I hung the lamp of my heart.

Ziumbiul my heart to and fro
Let swing and sob with the light,
Clouds of incense hanging high,
My soul a moon through the cloud;
The wailing lamp has wakened
Holy Virgin, Mother of God,
Plucked my soul from the cloud bank,
The Virgin kissed lover's light.

Early morning the old priest
Saw miracle and marveled.
"The lamp has turned into heart,
"Flickering light its soul and eyes,
"Virgin Mary to her heart
"The baby lamp she has pressed,
"Pressed to her heart all night long,
"Allayed the fires of her heart."

I will go take down the lamp,
From church to my home I'll take,
On the great day of judgment
What shall I say to the priest?
I took a gift to the church,
Was it a crime to act thus?
Fear not poor priest, go in peace,
I will shoulder the whole blame.

What does the sea want from sea,
What does the heart take from love?
What does the wind want from wind,

What does lover take from love?
Why is the sun hanging there,
What does it want from the earth?
Why has the moon been crying,
What does it want of the night?

Sea from the sea wants a kiss,
The heart from love plucks a flame,
Wind plucks a sigh from the wind,
Lover a wound from his love.
The sun's come down hanging low,
Begging a home from the earth,
The moon cries at eventide,
Begging slumber from midnight.

Ziumbiul dear can it be true
My love alone is cruel?
Everything is turned into love,
E'en the stone loves bloodless stone,
My love's closed her doors to me,
Wrapped in her black mourning clothes,
Has built a fire in her chest,
Fragile fingers guard the fire.

Inside my room all alone,
Weeding my heart desolate,
My heart lies in the coffin,
Piled with roses and *Rahan**,
Cruel my love has passed by,
My heart on fire she has set;
Her blade blossomed like the twig,
With drops of my bleeding heart.

I jog along endless road,
No sage and thyme scent the road,
Evil hands of passersby
Have plucked the sage and the thyme.
I walk and walk but ne'er reach
My love's village never I make;
Lightning has struck from the sky,
I can't touch the village smoke.

Pomegranate tree, I'm all in,
Standest there by the road,
Decked in your robe of blossoms red,

* *Rahan*—sweet basil.

Your shade on the ground is cast.
Let me rest underneath your shade,
My heart emerge from the flames;
O wayfarer it's not a flower,
Your petals pomegranates be,
Release my love from its arms.

It's gold I've tied to my brow,
To my slender height I've tied
My cash of golden brocade.
I fear you will steal my gold,
Will wind my cash round your waist;
I fear you'll unwind the sash,
And give away my secret.

O pomegranate where's my love?
I will make thee my own love.
One sweet love's day O sweet tree,
I will lie down neath your shade,
Jingling the gold of your brow,
I will take thee to my home,
Lest evil eyes see our embrace,
I will abscond in the night.

O pond from me do not run,
Don't run away in bare feet;
I have been a luckless man,
Pile of ashes smouldering hot,
Every man has given me a hurt.
Flowers have sprouted from my hurts,
My flowers each day been watered,
Drenched by the dew from your eyes.

If I am to be your love,
Consume us both by my fire,
Listen to me O my lad,
A boon to my longing wish;
You shall go mount your black steed,
Race your charger to the skies,
Sun, moon and stars, pluck them off,
Lay at my feet as your gift.

The sun the moon and the stars,
Holy wafer thou shalt bring,
Golden bracelets made for me,
Twin worlds shall roll into one.
Let that be our love's symbol,

The pond shall be your lover,
The gold heart of my gold fish
Shall soothe the pain of your hurt.

My black charger I will mount,
Will pierce the sky O my pond,
I'll pluck the sun and the moon,
My gift to you Ziumbiul mine.
If I perchance should fail thee
I'll fall from my black charger,
Fall into your bosom soft,
Golden net for golden fish.

Ziumbiul don't come, do not knock,
Do not knock at my heart's door.
My door's heart like my sad heart
Do not smite against its sting.
My cruel love has come to me,
Bled the red rose of my heart;
The blood has turned into tears,
Trickling down my door's key hole.

Ziumbiul did'st see who passed by?
Was it my love in the night?
Under the eaves of my home
A wounded bride wept the night,
Tore a white veil from the moon,
Fashioned the veil a silver key;
From my lover's silver pond
Breakers beat against my door.

Ziumbiul come over tonight,
Whip a balsam at my door,
Shear the wool with scissors sharp
Off the back of my lamb white,
From the deep well of the night
Draw the tar in golden pales,
From the moon's yellow beehive
Weave the honey in yellow.

Kneel down and mutter a prayer
In a low voice at my door,
That no longer you'll wander,
Lured by the wiles of Satan.
Stir the salve in dough of salt,
In the mortar of your heart,
Heal the wee heart of my door,
Sigh no longer in the dark.

I sliced my heart through the middle,
I inserted a Rahan through,
I went to my love's garden
Where I buried all my cares,
The Rahan broke into a bush,
My heart a phial of sweet scent,
My love scented it in her sleep,
Gushing brook on Easter morn.

My love rose in the morning,
Pushed open the shutters firm,
Surprized at the wondrous sight,
Blossoms shining all around,
Who passed my garden in the night?
She looked at the sky in wonder,

Jesus the child it must've been,
She fell back into her sleep.
Jesus the child passing through,

Pinned a Rahan to his chest,
From Rahan's virgin paradise
He would call you to the window,
Reaping a kiss from your lips
Wept his longing for his love,
Overflowing gurgling tears
Flowed from the stone in your heart.

Ziumbiul your love has passed through,
His heart buried in a pot,
Rahan sprouted through his heart,
The scent has turned into dew
The dew has flooded your soul,
Embraced your love in your sleep,
The shafts of my hot kisses
Have pierced the stone in your heart.

(To be concluded)

A SUMMARY OF ARMENIAN HISTORY UP TO AND INCLUDING THE YEAR 1915

ARNOLD TOYNBEE

IV. The Armenian People and the Ottoman Government

When the Ottoman Government entered the European War in 1914, it had ruled Armenia for just four hundred years, and still had for its subjects a majority of the Armenian people. Anyone who inquires into the relations between the Government and the governed during this period of Near Eastern history will find the contradictory opinions expressed. On the one hand he will be told that the Armenians, like the rest of the Christians in Turkey, were classed as "Rayah" (cattle¹) by the dominant race, and that this one word sums up their irremediable position; that they were not treated as citizens because they were not even treated as men. On the other hand, he will hear that the Ottoman Empire has been more liberal to its subject nationalities than many states in Western Europe; that the Armenians have been perfectly free to live their own life under a paternal government, and that the friction between the Government and its subjects has been due to the native perversity and instability of the Armenian character, or, worse still, to a revolutionary poison instilled by some common enemy from without. Both these extreme views are out

of perspective, but each of them represents a part of the truth.

It is undoubtedly true (to take the Turkish case first) that the Armenians have derived certain benefits from the Ottoman dispensation. The caste division between Moslem and Rayah, for instance, may stamp the Ottoman "State idea" as mediæval and incapable of progress; but this has injured the state as a whole more appreciably than the penalised section of it, for extreme penalisation works both ways. The Government ruled out the Christians so completely from the dominant Moslem commonwealth that it suffered and even encouraged them to form communities of their own. The "Rayah" became "Millet"—not yoke-oxen, but unshackled herds.

These Christian Millets were instituted by Sultan Mohammed II, after he had conquered Constantinople in 1453 and set himself to reorganise the Ottoman State as the conscious heir of the East Roman Empire. They are national corporations with written charters, often of an elaborate kind. Each of them is presided over by a Patriarch, who holds office at the discretion of the Government, but is elected by the community and is the recognized intermediary between the two, combining in his own person the headship of a voluntary "Rayah" association and the status of an

¹ It appears to be uncertain whether this is really the literal meaning of the word, its current connotation being purely the political one.

Ottoman official. The special function thus assigned to the Patriarchates gives the Millets, as an institution, an ecclesiastical character²; but in the Near East a church is merely the foremost aspect of a nationality, and the authority of the Patriarchates extends to the control of schools, and even to the administration of certain branches of civil law. The Millets, in fact, are practically autonomous bodies in all that concerns religion, culture and social life; but it is a maimed autonomy, for it is jealously debarred from any political expression. The establishment of the Millets is a recognition, and a palliation, of the pathological anomaly of the Near East — the political disintegration of Near Eastern peoples and the tenacity with which they have clung, in spite² of it, to their corporate spiritual life.

The organisation of the Millets was not a gain to all the Christian nations that had been subjected by the Ottoman power. Certain orthodox populations, like the Bulgars and the Serbs, actually lost an ecclesiastical autonomy which they had enjoyed before, and were merged in the Millet of the Greeks, under the Orthodox Patriarch at Constantinople. The Armenians, on the other hand, improved their position. As so-called schismatics, they had hitherto existed on sufferance under Orthodox and Catholic governments, but the Osmanlis viewed all varieties of Christian with an impartial eye. Mohammed II. summoned the Apostolic Bishop of the Armenian colony at Broussa, and raised him to the rank of an Armenian Patriarch at Constantinople. The Ottoman conquest thus left the Apostolic Armenians their religious individuality and put them on a legal equality with their neighbours of the Orthodox Faith, and the same privileges were

extended in time to the Armenians in communion with other churches. The Apostolic Millet was chartered in 1462, the Millet of Armenian Catholics in 1830, and the Millet of Armenian Protestants in the 'forties of the nineteenth century, as a result of the foundation of the American Missions.

The Armenians of the Dispersion, therefore, profited, in that respect, by Ottoman rule, and even in the Armenian homeland the account stood, on the whole, in the Ottoman Government's favour. The Osmanlis are often blamed for having given the Kurds a footing in this region, as a political move in their struggle with Persia; but the Kurds were not, originally, such a scourge to the Armenians as the Seljuks, Mongols, or Kara Koyunli, who had harried the land before, or as the Persians themselves, whom the Osmanlis and the Kurds ejected from the country. The three centuries of Kurdish feudalism under Ottoman suzerainty that followed Sultan Selim's campaign of 1514 were a less unhappy period for the Armenians than the three centuries and more of anarchy that had preceded them. They were a time of torpor before recuperation, and it was the Ottoman Government again that, by a change in its Kurdish policy, enabled this recuperation to set in. In the early part of the nineteenth century a vigorous anti-feudal, centralising movement was initiated by Sultan Mahmoud, a reformer who has become notorious for his unsuccessful handling of the Greek and Serbian problems without receiving the proper credit for his successes further east. He turned his attention to the Kurdish chieftains in 1834, and by the middle of the century his efforts had practically broken their power. Petty feudalism was replaced by a bureaucracy centered in Constantinople. The new officialdom was not ideal; it had new vices of its own; but it was impartial, by comparison, towards the two races whom

² The word "Millet" means simply "religious sect" in the Arabic language, from which it was borrowed by the Turks.

it had to govern, for the class prejudice of the Moslem against the well-behaved Rayah was balanced by the exasperation of the professional administrator with the unconscionable Kurd. In any case, this remodelling of the Ottoman State in the early decades of the nineteenth century introduced a new epoch in the history of the Armenian people. Coinciding as it did, with the establishment of the American Missions and the chartering of the Catholic and Protestant Millets, it opened to the Armenians opportunities of which they availed themselves to the full. An intellectual and economic renaissance of Armenian life began, parallel in many respects to the Greek renaissance a century before.

This comparison brings us back to the question: Was the Armenian revival of the nineteenth century an inevitable menace to the sovereignty and integrity of the Ottoman State? Is the disastrous breach between Armenian and Turk, which has actually occurred, simply the fruit of wrong-headed Armenian ambitions? That is the Turkish contention; but here the Turkish case breaks down, and we shall find the truth on the Armenian side.

The parallel with the Greek renaissance is misleading, if it implies a parallel with the Greek revolution. The Greek movement towards political separatism was, in a sense, the outcome of the general spiritual movement that preceded it; but it was hardly an essential consequence, and certainly not a fortunate one. The Greek War of Independence liberated one fraction of the Greek race at the price of exterminating most of the others and sacrificing the favoured position which the Greek element had previously enjoyed throughout the Ottoman Empire. It was not an encouraging precedent for the Armenians, and the objections to following it in their own case were more formidable still. As we have seen, no portion of Ottoman territory was

exclusively inhabited by them, and they were nowhere even in an absolute majority, except in certain parts of the Province of Van, so that they had no natural rallying point for a national revolt, such as the Greeks had in the Islands and the Morea. They were scattered from one end to another of the Ottoman Empire; the whole Empire was their heritage, and it was a heritage that they must necessarily share with the Turks, who were in a numerical majority and held the reins of political power. The alternative to an Ottoman State was not an Armenian State, but a partition among the Powers, which would have ended the ambitions of Turk and Armenian alike. The Powers concerned were quite ready for a partition, if only they could agree upon a division of the spoils. This common inheritance of the Armenians and the Turks was potentially one of the richest countries in the Old World, and one of the few that had not yet been economically developed. Its native inhabitants, still scanty, backward and divided against themselves, were not yet capable of defending their title against spoilers from without; they only maintained it at present by a fortuitous combination in the balance of power, which might change at any moment. The problem for the Armenians was not how to overthrow the Ottoman Empire but how to preserve it, and their interest in its preservation was even greater than that of their Turkish neighbours and co-heirs. Our geographical survey has shown that talent and temperament had brought most of the industry, commerce, finance and skilled intellectual work of Turkey into the Armenians' hands. The Greeks may still have competed with them on the Aegean fringe, and the Sephardi Jews in the Balkans, but they had the whole interior of the Empire to themselves, with no competition to fear from the agricultural Turks or the pastoral Kurds. And

if the Empire were preserved by timely reforms from within, the position of the Armenians would become still more favourable, for they were the only native element capable of raising the Empire economically, intellectually and morally to a European standard, by which alone its existence could permanently be secured. The main effort must be theirs, and they would reap the richest reward.

Thus, from the Armenian point of view, a national entente with the Turks was an object of vital importance, to be pursued for its ultimate results in spite of present difficulties and drawbacks. About the middle of the nineteenth century there seemed every likelihood of its being attained. The labours of Sultan Mahmoud and the influence of Great Britain and France had begun to inoculate the Turkish ruling class with liberal ideas. An admirable "Law of Nationalities" was promulgated, and there was a project for a parliamentary constitution. It looked, to an optimist, as if the old mediaeval caste-division of Moslem and Rayah might die away and allow Armenian, Turk and Kurd to find their true relation to one another—not as irreconcilable sects or races, but as different social elements in the same community, whose mutual interest was to co-operate for a common end.

This was the logical policy for the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire to pursue, and the logic of it was so clear that they have clung to it through difficulties and drawbacks sufficient to banish logic altogether—"difficulties" which amounted to a bankruptcy of political sense of the Imperial Government, and "drawbacks" which culminated in official massacres of the Armenian population. There were two causes of this sinister turn of events: the external crisis through which the Empire passed in the years 1875-8, and the impression this crisis made upon Sultan Abd-

ul-Hamid, who came to the throne in 1876, when it was entering upon its gravest phase.

In these years the Empire had been brought to the verge of ruin by the revolt of a subject Christian population, the Bosniak Serbs, which spread to the other subject races in the Balkan provinces, and by a momentary breakdown in the diplomatic mechanism of the European balance of power, which enabled Russia to throw her military force into the scales on the Balkan rebels' behalf. The ruin was arrested and partially repaired, when Turkey lay prostrate under Russia's heel, by a reassertion of the balance of power, which deprived Russia of most of her gains and half the Balkan Christians of their new-won liberties. Abd-ul-Hamid was clever enough to learn from these experiences, but not unfortunately, to learn aright, and he devoted all his astuteness to carrying out a policy far more injurious to the Empire than the troubles it was meant to avert. He seems to have inferred from the war with Russia that Turkey was not and never would be strong enough to hold its own against a first-class power; it was not her internal strength that had saved her, but the external readjustment of forces. Therefore, any attempt to strengthen the Empire from within, by reconciling its racial elements and developing its natural resources, was Utopian and irrelevant to the problem. The only object of importance was to insure against an attack by any single Power by keeping all the Great Powers in a state of jealous equilibrium. Now the breakdown of this equilibrium, in 1877, which had been so disastrous for Turkey, had been directly caused by an antecedent disturbance of equilibrium within the Empire itself. A subject Christian nationality had tried to break away violently from the Ottoman body-politic. Here was the root of the whole trouble, to Abd-ul-Hamid's

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mind, and the primary object of his policy must be to prevent such a thing from happening again. The subject nationalities of the Empire were not for him unrealised assets; they were potential destroyers of the State, more formidable even than the foreign Powers. Their potentialities must be neutralised, and the surest course, with them as with the Powers, was to play them off against one another. In fine, the policy of Abd-ul-Hamid was the exact antithesis of the instinctive Armenian policy which we have indicated above; it was not to strengthen the Empire by bringing the nationalities into harmony, but to weaken the nationalities, at whatever cost to the Empire, by setting them to cut each other's throats. Abd-ul-Hamid applied this policy for forty years. The Macedonians and the Armenians were his special victims, but only the Armenians concern us here.

It was inevitable that the Armenians should be singled out by Abd-ul-Hamid for repression. When Turkey sued for peace in 1878, the Russian troops were in occupation of the greater part of the Armenian plateau, and the Russian plenipotentiaries inserted an Article (No. 16) in the Treaty of San Stefano making the evacuation of these provinces conditional upon the previous introduction of reforms in their administration by the Ottoman Government. A concrete scheme for the reorganization of the six vilayets in question³ had already been drawn up by a delegation of their Armenian inhabitants. It provided for the creation of an Armenian Governor-General, empowered to appoint and remove the officials subordinate to him; a mixed gendarmerie of Armenians and the sedentary elements in the Moslem population, to the exclusion of the nomadic Kurds; a general assembly, consisting of Moslem and Christian deputies in equal

numbers; and equal rights for every creed. The Ottoman Government had approved and even encouraged this project of provincial autonomy when it feared that the alternative was the cession of the provinces to Russia. As soon as it had made certain of the Russian evacuation, its approval turned into indifference; and when the European Congress met at Berlin to revise the San Stefano Treaty, the Ottoman emissaries exerted themselves to quash the project altogether. In this they were practically successful, for the Treaty drawn up at Berlin by the Congress merely engaged the Ottoman Government, in general terms⁴ to introduce "ameliorations" in the "provinces inhabited by Armenians," without demanding any guarantee at all.⁵ The Russian troops were withdrawn and the ameliorations were a dead letter. The Ottoman Government was reminded of them, in 1880, by a collective Note from the six Powers. But it left the Note unanswered, and after the diplomatic demarches had dragged on for two years the question was shelved, on Bismarck's suggestion, because no Power except Great Britain would press it.

The seed of the "Armenian Reforms" had thus fallen upon stony ground, except in the mind of Abd-ul-Hamid, where it lodged and rankled till it bore the fruit of the "Armenian Massacres." The project had not really been a menace to Ottoman sovereignty and integrity. It was merely a proposal to apply in six vilayets that elementary measure of "amelioration" which was urgently needed by the Empire as a whole, and without which it could never

⁴ Article 61.

⁵ There was an equally vague clause to the same effect in the special "Cyprus Convention" between Turkey and Great Britain, but in neither treaty was there any guarantee of its observance. The Berlin Treaty merely provided that the Ottoman Government should communicate its measures of reform to the Powers, but, as they were never carried out, they were never reported.

³ Erzeroum, Van, Bitlis, Diarbekir, Mamouret-ul-Aziz, Sivas.

begin to develop its internal strength. But to Abd-ul-Hamid it was unforgivable, for to him every concession to a subject Christian nationality was suspect. He had seen the Bulgars given ecclesiastical autonomy by the Ottoman Government in 1870 and then raised by Russia, within eight years, into a semi-independent political principality. Armenian autonomy had been averted for the moment, but the parallel might still hold good, for Russia's influence over the Armenians had been increasing.

Russia had conquered the Armenian provinces of Persia in 1828,⁶ and this had brought within her frontier the Monastery of Etchmiadzin, in the Khannate of Erivan, which was the seat of the Katholikos of All the Armenians. The power of this Katholikos was at that time very much in abeyance. He was an ecclesiastical relic of the ancient united Armenian Kingdom of Tigranes and Tiridates, which had been out of existence for fourteen hundred years. There was another Katholikos at Sis, a relic of the mediaeval kingdom of Cilicia, who did not acknowledge his supremacy, and he was thrown into the shade altogether by the Armenian Patriarch at Constantinople, who was the official head of the Armenian Millet in the Ottoman Empire—at that time an overwhelming majority of the Armenian people. But Russian diplomacy succeeded in reviving the Katholikos of Etchmiadzin's authority. In the 'forties of the nineteenth century, when Russian influence at Constantinople was at its height and Russian protection seemed the only recourse for Turkey against the ambition of Mehemet Ali, the ecclesiastical supremacy of Etchmiadzin over Constantinople and Sis was definitely established, and the Katholikos of Etch-

miadzin, a resident in Russian territory became once more the actual as well as the titular head of the whole Apostolic Church. Russia had thus acquired an influence over the Armenians as a nation, and individual Armenians were acquiring a reciprocal influence in Russia. They had risen to eminence, not only in commerce, but in the public service and in the army. They had distinguished themselves particularly in the war of 1877. Loris Melikov, Lazarev and Tergoukasev, three of the most successful generals on the Russian side, were of Armenian nationality. Melikov had taken the fortress of Kars, and the Treaty of Berlin left his conquest in Russian's possession with a zone of territory that rounded off the district ceded by Persia fifty years before. The Russian frontier was thus pushed forward on to the Armenian plateau, and now included an important Armenian population — important enough to make its mark on the general life of the Russian Empire⁷ and to serve as a national rallying-point for the Armenians who still remained on the Ottoman side of the line.

Such considerations outweighed all others in Abd-ul-Hamid's mind. His Armenian subjects must be deprived of their formidable vitality, and he decided to crush them by resuscitating the Kurds. From 1878 onwards he encouraged their lawlessness, and in 1891 he deliberately undid the work of his predecessor, Mahmoud. The Kurdish chieftains were taken again into favour and decorated with Ottoman military rank; their tribes were enrolled as squadrons of territorial cavalry; regimental badges and modern rifles were served out

⁶ Russia began to acquire territory south of the Caucasus at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the last King of Georgia ceded his Kingdom to the Tsar, to save it from the hands of the Turks and Persians.

⁷ Tiflis, the former capital of the Georgian Kingdom and now the administrative centre of the Russian Provinces of the Caucasus has become practically an Armenian city in the course of the nineteenth century, and Armenian settlements have spread far further into the interior of Russia.

to them from the Government stores, and their retaining fee was a free hand to use their official status and their official weapons as they pleased against their Armenian neighbours. At the same time the latter were systematically disarmed; the only retaliation open to them was the formation of secret revolutionary societies, and this fitted in entirely with Abd-ul-Hamid's plans, for it made a racial conflict inevitable. The disturbances began in 1893 with the posting up of revolutionary placards in Yozgad and Marsovan. This was soon followed by an open breach between Moslem and Christian in the districts of Moush and Sassoun, and there was a rapid concentration of troops—some of them Turkish regulars, but most of them Hamidie Kurds. Sassoun was besieged for several months, and fell in 1894. The Sassounlis — men, women and children—were savagely massacred by the Turks and Kurds, and the attention of Great Britain was aroused. In the winter of 1894-5 Great Britain persuaded France and Russia to join her in reminding the Ottoman Government of its pledge to introduce provincial reforms, and in the spring they presented a concrete programme for the administration of the Six Vilayets. In its final form it was a perfunctory project, and the counter-project which the Ottoman Government announced its intention of applying in its stead was more illusory still. It was promulgated in 1895, but the first of a new series of organised massacres had already taken place a few days earlier, at Trebizond, and in the following months the slaughter was extended to one after another of the principal towns of the Empire. These atrocities were nearly all committed against peaceful, unarmed urban populations. The only place that resisted was Zeitoun, which held out for six months against a Turkish army, and was finally amnestied by the mediation of the Powers. The anti-Armenian out-

breaks were instigated and controlled by the Central Government, and were crowned, in August, 1896, by the great massacre at Constantinople, where for two days the Armenians, at the Government's bidding, were killed indiscriminately in the streets, until the death roll amounted to many thousands. Then Abd-ul-Hamid held his hand. He had been feeling the pulse of public opinion, both abroad and at home, and he saw that he had gone far enough.⁸ In all more than 100,000 men, women and children had perished, and for the moment he had sufficiently crippled the Armenian element in his Empire.

Yet this Macchiavellian policy was ultimately as futile as it was wicked. In the period after the massacres the Armenian population in Turkey was certainly reduced, partly by the actual slaughter and partly by emigration abroad. But this only weakened the Empire without permanently paralysing the Armenian race. The emigrants struck new roots in the United States and in the Russian Caucasus, acquired new resources, enlisted new sympathies; and Russia was the greatest gainer of all. The Armenians had little reason, at the time, to look towards Russia with special sympathy or hope. In Russia, as in Turkey, the war of 1877-8 had been followed by a political reaction, which was aggravated by the assassination of the Tsar, Alexander II., in 1881; and the Armenians, as an energetic, intellectual, progressive element in the Russian Empire, were classed by the police with the revolutionaries, and came under their heavy hand. Yet once an Armenian was on the Russian side of the frontier his life and property at least were safe. He could be

⁸ Though the British Government was the only Government that attempted to put pressure on the Turks to desist. In Germany it was the *mot d'ordre* that the massacres were a British invention with a political purpose, and the Emperor shortly afterwards sent his portrait to Abd-ul-Hamid as a complimentary gift.

sure of reaping the fruits of his labour, and had not to fear sudden death in the streets. During the quarter of a century that followed the Treaty of Berlin, the Armenian population of the Russian provinces increased remarkably in prosperity and numbers, and now, after the massacres, they were reinforced by a constant stream of Ottoman refugees. The centre of gravity of the Armenian nation was shifting more and more from Ottoman to Russian territory. Russia has profited by the crimes of her neighbours. The Hamidian regime lasted from 1878 to 1908, and did all that any policy could do to widen the breach between the Ottoman State and the Armenian people. Yet the natural community of interest was so strong that even thirty years of repression did not make the Armenians despair of Ottoman regeneration.

Nothing is more significant than the conduct of the Armenians in 1908, when Abd-ul-Hamid was overthrown by the Young Turkish Revolution, and there was a momentary possibility that the Empire might be reformed and preserved by the initiative of the Turks themselves. At this crisis the real attitude of the different nationalities in the Empire was revealed. The Kurds put up a fight for Abd-ul-Hamid, because they rejoiced in the old dispensation. The Macedonians—Greek, Bulgar and Serb—who had been the Armenians' principal fellow-victims in the days of oppression, paid the Constitution lip-homage and secretly prepared to strike. They were irreconcilable irredentists, and saw in the reform of the Empire simply an obstacle to their secession from it. They took counsel with their kinsmen in the independent national States of Serbia, Bulgaria and four years later, the Balkan League attacked Turkey and tore away her Macedonian provinces by force.

The Armenians, on the other hand, threw themselves whole-heartedly into the

service of the new regime. As soon as the Ottoman Constitution was restored, the Armenian political parties abandoned their revolutionary programme in favour of parliamentary action, and co-operated in Parliament with the Young Turkish bloc so long as Young Turkish policy remained in any degree liberal or democratic. The terrible Adana massacres which occurred less than a year after the Constitution had been proclaimed, might have damped the Armenians' enthusiasm (though at first the proof that the Young Turks were implicated in them was not so clear as it has since become). Yet they showed their loyalty in 1912, when the Turks were fighting for their existence. It was only under the new laws that the privilege and duty of military service had been extended to the Christian as well as the Moslem citizens of the Empire, and the diastrous Balkan Campaign was the first opportunity that Armenian soldiers were given of doing battle for their common heritage. But they bore themselves so well in this ordeal that they were publicly commended by their Turkish commanders. Thus, in war and peace, in the Army and in Parliament, the Armenians worked for the salvation of the Ottoman Commonwealth, from the accession of the Young Turks in 1908 till their intervention in the European War in 1914. It is impossible to reconcile with this fact the Turkish contention that in 1914 they suddenly reversed their policy and began treacherously to plot for the Ottoman Empire's destruction.

V. The Deportations of 1915: Antecedents

There is no dispute as to what happened in 1915. The Armenian inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire were everywhere uprooted from their homes, and deported to the most remote and unhealthy districts that the Government could select for them. Some were murdered at the outset, some

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perished on the way, and some died after reaching their destination. The death-roll amounts to upwards of six hundred thousand; perhaps six hundred thousand more are still alive in their places of exile; and the remaining six hundred thousand or so have either been converted forcibly to Islam, gone into hiding in the mountains, or escaped beyond the Ottoman frontier. The Ottoman Government cannot deny these facts, and they cannot justify them. No provocation or misdemeanour on the part of individual Armenians could justify such a crime against the whole race. But it might be explained and palliated if the Armenians, or some of them, were originally in the wrong; and therefore the Ottoman Government and its German apologists have concentrated their efforts on proving that this was the case.⁹ There are three main Turkish contentions, none of which will bear examination.

The first contention is that the Armenians took up arms and joined the Russians, as soon as the latter crossed the Ottoman frontier. The standard case its champion cite is the "Revolt of Van." The deportations, they maintain, were only ordered after this outbreak to forestall the danger of its repetition else-where. This contention is easily rebutted. In the first place, there was no Armenian revolt at Van. The Armenians merely defended the quarter of the city in which they lived, after it had been beleaguered and attacked by Turkish troops, and the outlying villages visited with massacre by Turkish patrols. The outbreak was on the Turkish side, and the responsibility lies with the Turkish governor, Djevdet Bey. The ferocious, uncontrollable character of this official was the true cause of the catastrophe. Anyone

who reads the impartial American testimony on this point, will see that this was so. And, in the second place, the deportations had already begun in Cilicia before the fighting at Van broke out. The Turks fired the first shot at Van on the 20th April, 1915; the first Armenians were deported from Zeitoun on the 8th April, and there is a record of their arrival in Syria as early as the 19th.¹⁰ The case of Van, which the apologists have made so much of, simply falls to the ground,¹¹ and they cannot rehabilitate themselves by adding any previous revolt at Zeitoun. It is true that twenty-five fugitive conscripts defended themselves for a day in a monastery near Zeitoun against Turkish troops, and decamped into the mountains during the night. But this happened only one day before the deportation, and the deportation must have been decided upon far in advance, for it was preceded by a protracted inquisition for arms, and there were Moslem refugees from the Balkans concentrated on the spot, ready to occupy the Zeitounlis' houses the moment the rightful owners were carried off. During all these preliminary proceedings—most of which were violations of the charter of liberties

¹⁰Doc. 138.

¹¹In the pamphlet *Vérité sur le mouvement révolutionnaire Arménien et les mesures gouvernementales*, the following passages occur: "The Imperial (Ottoman) Government abstained from exercising any pressure or adopting any repressive measures against the Armenians until the day the revolt broke out at Van towards the middle of April, 1915" (page 10); "No coercive measure was decreed by the Imperial Government against the Armenians until the date of their armed revolt, which took place at Van and in the other military zones in the course of the month of June, of the year 1915, and until they had made common cause with the enemy forces" (page 15). These statements are direct falsehoods, as is also the statement (page 12) that—"After the occupation of Van by the Russians and Armenians, the Moslem population of the town was pitilessly massacred." We have authoritative neutral testimony (e.g., Docs. 120, 121, 122 and 15) on both these points, by which the Turkish statements are refuted. Yet these lying statements are the pivot of the whole apologia presented in this pamphlet.

⁹In such publications as *Vérité sur le mouvement révolutionnaire Arménien et les mesures gouvernementales* (Constantinople, 1916); or *Die Armenische Frage*, von C. A. Bratter (Berlin, Concordia-Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1915).

held by Zeitoun from the Ottoman Government—the population as a whole (15,000 individuals as against the 25 who rebelled) very scrupulously kept the peace. This was the policy of the leaders, and they were obeyed by the people. Nothing happened at Zeitoun that can account for the Government's scheme of deportation.

There were several other instances in which the Armenians took up arms, but none of them are relevant to the case. They were all subsequent in date to these cardinal instances, and were simply attempts at self-defence by people who had seen their neighbours massacred or deported, and were threatened with the same fate themselves. The Armenians of Moush resisted when they were attacked by Djeddet Bey, who had already tried to massacre the Armenians of Van and had succeeded in massacring those of Sairt and Bitlis. The Armenians of Sassoun resisted when the Kurds had destroyed their kinsmen in the plain of Diyarbekir and were closing in upon themselves. This was in June, and the Nestorian Christians of Hakkiari resisted under the same circumstances and at the same date. Further west, a few villages took up arms in the Vilayet of Sivas, after the rest of the Sivas Armenians had been deported; and at Shabin Kara-Hissar the Armenians drove out their Turkish fellow-townsmen and stood for several weeks at bay, when they heard how the exiles from Trebizond and Kerasond had been murdered on the road. The defence of Djibal Mousa (Mousa Dag) in August (the only story in this volume with a happy ending) was similarly inspired by the previous fate of Zeitoun. The resistance at Ourfa in September was another act of despair, provoked by the terrible procession of exile from Harpout and the north-east, which had been filing for three months through Ourfa before the Armenian colony there was also summoned to take the road. These are all

the instances of resistance that are reported, and they were all a consequence of the deportations, and not their cause. It may be added that, wherever resistance was offered, the Turks suppressed it with inconceivable brutality, not merely retaliating upon the fighting men, but in most cases, massacring every Armenian man, woman and child in cold blood after the fighting was over. These cases were not palliations of the atrocities, but occasions of the worst excesses.

The second contention is that there was a general conspiracy of Armenians throughout the Empire to bring about an internal revolution at a moment when all the Ottoman military forces were engaged on the frontiers, and so deliver the country into the hands of the Allies. The prompt action of the Ottoman Government in disarming, imprisoning, executing and deporting the whole people—innocent and guilty alike—is alleged to have crushed this movement before it had time to declare itself. This is an insidious line of argument, because it refuses to be tested by the evidence of what actually occurred. If the actual outbreaks were isolated, inspired by panic, confined to self-defence, and posterior in date to the Government's own preventive measures, all that, on this hypothesis, is not a proof of the Armenians' innocence, but only of the Government's energy and foresight. Yet when this indictment is examined, it, too, is found to rest on the most frivolous grounds.

The revolution it is alleged, was to break out when the Allies landed in Cilicia—but such a landing was never made; or it was arranged in conjunction with the landing at the Dardanelles—but the landing was made and the outbreak never happened. Indeed it is hard to see what the Armenians could have done, for nearly all their able-bodied men between twenty and forty-five years of age were mobilised at

the beginning of the war and the age limit was soon extended in either direction to eighteen and fifty. The Turks make sweeping allegations about secret stores of bombs and arms, which prove to be false in every case where they can be checked. The Armenians certainly possessed a moderate number of rifles and revolvers, because, for the past six years, under the Young Turkish regime, they had been permitted to carry arms for their personal security, a privilege that had always been enjoyed, as a matter of course, by every Moslem in the Ottoman Empire. But evidently there were not enough arms in their possession to go round, even among the comparatively few men left behind after mobilisation; for when, in the winter of 1914-5, the Ottoman authorities made a house-to-house search for arms, and conducted their inquisition by atrocious physical tortures, the Armenians bought arms from each other and from their Moslem neighbours, in order to be able to deliver them up and suffer no worse punishment than mere imprisonment. This practice is recorded independently by several trustworthy witnesses from various localities.¹²

The stories of bombs are more extravagant still. In the town of X., for instance, a bomb was unearthed in the Armenian cemetery, which was made the pretext for the most atrocious procedure against the Armenian inhabitants. Yet the bomb was rusty with age, and was believed to date from the days of Abd-ul-Hamid, when the Young Turks, as well as the Armenian political parties, were a secret revolutionary organization and not averse to using bombs themselves. In the same town, a blacksmith in the employment of the American College was cruelly tortured for "constructing a bomb"; but the "bomb" turned out to be a solid iron shot which he had been commissioned to make for

the competition of "putting the weight" in the College athletic sports.

It was also alleged that Armenians resident on the coast had been in treacherous communication with the Allied fleets. The Armenian boatmen of Silivrig¹³ for instance, on the Sea of Marmora, were deported on the ground that they had furnished supplies to British submarines; and before this, as early as April, 1915, half-a-dozen Armenians from Dort Yol, a village on the Gulf of Alexandretta, were hanged at Adana on the charge of having signalled to the Franco-British cruiser squadron—a step which was followed up by the deportation of the whole population of Dort Yol into the interior, to do navy-work on the roads. This charge against Dort Yol can be checked, for the witness of the hangings (a resident in Cilicia of neutral nationality and excellent standing)¹⁴ states, from his personal knowledge, that only one Armenian from Dort Yol had had any communication with the Allied warships. This evidence is authoritative, and it has probability on its side; for, if Dort Yol was in regular communication with the Allied squadron, it is inconceivable that the Armenians of Djibal Mousa, a few miles further down the coast, should have taken 44 days to attract the same squadron's attention, when it was a question for them of life and death.¹⁵

Thus the second contention breaks down, and we are left with the third, which lays little stress on justice or public safety and bases the case on revenge. The Armenian civil population in the Ottoman Empire, it is argued, owes its misfortunes to the Armenian volunteers in the Russian Army. "Our Armenians in Turkey," say the Turks in effect, "have certainly suffered terribly from the measures we have taken; they may even have suffered innocently; but can you blame us? Was it not human na-

¹³ Doc. 98.

¹⁴ Doc. 123.

¹⁵ Docs. 130 and 131.

¹² See Docs. 68, 82, 94 and 122.

ture that we should revenge ourselves on the Armenians at home for the injury we had received from their compatriots fighting against us at the front in the Russian ranks—men who had actually volunteered to fight against us in the enemy's cause?"

This is almost the favourite argument of the apologists and yet it is surely the most monstrous of any, for these Armenian volunteers owed no allegiance to the Turks at all, but were ordinary Russian subjects. Through territorial acquisitions and free immigration from across the frontier, the Russian Government had, by 1914, acquired the sovereignty over little less than half the Armenian nation.¹⁶ Russia was as much the lawful "fatherland" of this substantial minority as Turkey was of the remainder. It is a misfortune for any nation to be divided between two allegiances, especially when the states to which they owe them elect to go to war; but it is at least an alleviation of the difficulty, and one that does honour to both parties concerned, when either fraction of the divided nationality finds itself in sympathy, even under the test of war, with the particular state to which its allegiance is legally due. The loyalty of the Russian Armenians to Russia¹⁷ cast no imputation upon the Ottoman Armenians, and was no concern of the Turks. The latter will probably explain that they had no objection to the Russian Armenians doing their duty, but resented their doing more: "The conscripts naturally

answered the summons, but why did those who were exempt equip themselves so eagerly as volunteers? The Ottoman Armenians adopted a painfully different attitude. At the beginning of the war, the Young Turkish Party sent representatives to the Congress of the Armenian 'Dashnak-tzoutioun' Party at Erzeroum, offered them concessions to their nationality, and called upon them to organize volunteers and join in the invasion of Russian territory.¹⁸ Yet they decidedly refused—refused in this case when their kinsmen did not wait to be asked in the other. This reveals the real sympathies and aspirations of the Armenian people, not only the Armenians in Russia, but those in our country as well."

There is, of course, a crushing answer to these tirades. If the Armenians felt so differently towards the Turks and the Russians, then that was a serious reflection on their treatment by the Turks, and the logical way to change their feelings was to treat them better. Could the civilian Armenians who remembered the massacre of their innocent kinsfolk at Adana a few years before have been expected to volunteer in support of those who had commanded these massacres? Could their feelings have been other than they were? But so long as only their feelings were in question and their behaviour remained correct, the Turks had no right to proceed with them in any but a humane and constitutional manner. The argument can be driven home by a parallel. There are Polish volunteer legions in the Austro-Hungarian Army. What would the Turks' German apologists have said if the Russian Government had appeased its resentment against these Austrian-Polish volunteers by wiping out all the Russian-Polish civilians on their own side of the frontier?

It is a significant fact that all these Turkish complaints are directed against Rus-

¹⁶ According to an official calendar, published at Alexandropol by authority of the Katholikos of Etchmiadzin, from which extracts have been communicated to the Editor by Mr. H. N. Mosditchian, the statistics of the Armenian population in Russia, up to date, are 1,636,486 for the Caucasus, and approximately two million for the Empire as a whole. For the Ottoman Empire, statistics compiled at the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople in 1912 estimate the Armenian population at 2,100,000; Turkish official statistics, on the other hand, admit no more than 1,100,000, which on their own showing would give Russia a majority.

¹⁷ For evidence of this loyalty, see Annex B, to this summary, in the British White Book.

¹⁸ Docs. 21 and 57.

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sian Armenians in Russian service. There is no hint of treachery or malingering on the part of those Ottoman Armenians who had been drafted, many of them illegally, into the Turkish Army—no insinuation that their record was not as satisfactory in 1914 as in 1912.¹⁹ To the editor's knowledge, the German apologists have only been able to fasten upon two "traitors" in the legal (though not in the moral) sense of the word. There have been refugees, of course, like Mourad of Sivas, who escaped into the Caucasus when the atrocities were in full course—men who had just been compelled to fight for their lives, and had seen their neighbours and kinsfolk massacred once more on all sides of them. Not even the German apologists would dare to censure these men under these circumstances for enrolling in the volunteers. But there are only two cases adduced of Ottoman subjects who went over to the Russians before the atrocities began—a certain Karekin Pasdermadjian, a deputy in the Ottoman Parliament, and another Armenian named Suren, stated to have been a delegate at the "Dashnaktzoutioun" Congress at Erzeroum. "In face of this," argues the German writer from whose pamphlet these instances are taken,²⁰ "it was the Ottoman Government's duty to uphold public law and order. In wartime, measures of this kind assume an especially weighty and pressing character"—and with this generality he implicitly condones the atrocities of 1915. If this represents the official apology of the Ottoman Government, the only answer is a *reductio ad absurdum*. On the same principle when Sir Roger Casement landed from a German submarine on the

Irish coast, it would have been the British Government's duty to deport all the Roman Catholic inhabitants of Ireland and maroon them, say, on the coast of Labrador or in the central desert of Australia. The parallel is exact and leaves nothing more to be said, unless, indeed, what was said by Talaat Bey, the Young Turkish Minister of the Interior, in a recent interview with a correspondent of the *Berliner Tageblatt*.²¹ "The sad events that have occurred in Armenia," he vouchsafed, "have prevented my sleeping well at night. We have been reproached for making no distinction between the innocent Armenians and the guilty; but that was utterly impossible, in view of the fact that *those who were innocent to-day might be guilty to-morrow*." There is no need of further witnesses.

The various Turkish contentions thus fail, from first to last, to meet the point. They all attempt to trace the atrocities of 1915 to events arising out of the war; but they not only cannot justify them on this ground, they do not even suggest any adequate motive for their perpetration. It is evident that the war was merely an opportunity and not a cause—in fact, that the deportation scheme, and all that it involved, flowed inevitably from the general policy of the Young Turkish Government. This inference will be confirmed if we analyse the political tenets to which the Young Turks were committed.

The Young Turkish movement began as a reaction against the policy of Abd-ul-Hamid. Its founders repudiated his "neutralisation of forces"; they maintained that the Ottoman Empire must stand by its own strength, and that this strength must be developed by a radical internal reconstruction. From their asylum at Paris they preached the doctrines of French Revolu-

¹⁹ The 25 recalcitrants at Zeitoun do not come into question, for the Zeitounlis were excepted from military service by special charter, and the attempt to conscribe them was a violation by the Ottoman authorities of Ottoman law.

²⁰ *Die Armenische Frage*, von C. A. Bratter, Berlin, Concordia Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1915. The reference is to pp. 9-10.

²¹ Reproduced in the Paris journal *Le Matin*, 6th May, 1916, in a special despatch dated Zurich, 5th May.

tion—religious toleration, abolition of caste-privileges, equality of all citizens before the law equality of obligation to perform military service, constitutional government through a representative parliament. And when they came into power, they made some attempt to put these doctrines into practice. In Turkey for a brief space of the year 1908, as in France twelve decades before, the vision of "Pure Reason" did bring peace and goodwill among men. Nearly all the foreign observers who were in the country when "Huriet" came, testify to this momentary, magic transfiguration of hatred into love; and the Armenians, who had desired more than any of their neighbours to see this day, might well believe that the Young Turks' ideal was identical with their own. Yet there were vital differences beneath the surface. The Young Turks realised that the Christian elements were an asset; they did not propose, at the outset, to destroy them, as Abd-ul-Hamid had done; but they wanted still less to co-operate with them as separate partners in the Ottoman State. The "Milletts" were as abhorrent to them, as an institution, as the autocracy of Abd-ul-Hamid. They set up against the principle of the "Millet" the programme of "Ottomanisation." The Turkish leaven was to permeate the non-Turkish lump, until it had all become of one uniform Turkish substance. In Parliament this programme took such forms as a bill to make the Turkish language the universal and compulsory medium of secondary education²² and the Armenian deputies found themselves opposing it in concert with the Liberal Party, which included the Arab bloc and stood for the toleration of national individualities. The Young Turks, in fact had imbibed both the good currents and the bad in the modern political atmosphere of Western Eu-

rope—its democratic doctrines but its chauvinism as well. Most political theorists debarred from responsible practice give this same confused allegiance to incompatible ideals, and all, when they come into power, are compelled by circumstances to choose which master they will serve. In 1908, the choice of the Young Turks was not predestined; the "Committee of *Union and Progress*" might have set its face towards either of its divided goals; but disillusionment soon decided its orientation. The magic dawn of "Huriet" faded; the old, crushing burden of Ottoman Government descended upon shoulders not expert, like Abd-ul-Hamid's, at balancing the weight; the Austro-Bulgarian violation of the Treaty of Berlin and the subsequent territorial losses of the Balkan War shook the Young Turkish Party's prestige, aggravated the difficulty of their problem, and embittered their attitude towards it solution. The current of chauvinism gained upon them more and more, and their intervention in the European War demonstrated that its mastery was complete, for their calculations in intervening were of a thoroughly Prussian character. A military triumph was to restore them their prestige; it was to recover ancient territories of the Empire in Egypt, the Caucasus and the coveted Persian province of Azerbaijan; it was to shake off the trammels of international control, and solve the internal problem by cutting the Gordian Knot. But the hopes of conquest and prestige were early shattered by the strategical failures of the winter of 1914-5, which were almost as humiliating as those of 1912, and then the Young Turks concentrated savagely upon "Ottomanisation" at home.

Ottomanisation has become the Young Turks' obsession.²³ Their first act after declaring war was to repudiate the Capitulations; their latest stroke has been to declare the Turkish language the exclusive

²² The vast majority of secondary schools in the Empire being, of course, American, Armenian or Greek, and practically none of them Turkish.

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medium of official business in the Empire, with only a year's delay—a step which has caused consternation among their German allies. And in this mood they turned to the Armenian question, which happened at the moment to have reached an important phase.

In 1912-3 the diplomatists of Europe had once more met in consultation over the Ottoman Empire, and the Armenians had presented their case to the Conference at London, as they had presented it at Berlin thirty-five years before.²³ When the Conference proved unable to take cognizance of their petition, they applied to the individual governments of the Powers. The Russian Government took the initiative and drafted a new scheme for the administration of the Six Vilayets, which it submitted to the Signatories of the Treaty of Berlin. The German Government opposed, but was won over by the Russian diplomacy and by the representations of the Armenian delegates, who repaired to Berlin in person. Then, when the German opposition had been withdrawn, the Russian draft was revised by the Ambassadors of the Powers at Constantinople, accepted, with modifications, by the Young Turkish Government, and actually promulgated by them on the 8th February, 1914.

In its final shape, the scheme still embodied the main points of reform which had been regarded as cardinal ever since 1878. There was to be a mixed Gendarmerie, under a European chief, recruited from the Turks and Armenians, but closed to the Kurds; Moslem and Christian were to be equal before the law; the Armenian language was to be a recognized medium in the courts and public offices (a bitter clause for the Young Turkish nationalists); there were to be no restrictions on the mul-

tiplication of Armenian schools. Finally, the vilayets affected by the scheme²⁵ were to be divided into two groups, and each group was to be placed under a European Inspector-General. The two Inspector-Generals were authorised to appoint and dismiss all officials in their respective spheres, except those "of superior rank." They were themselves to be appointed by the Ottoman Government, on the recommendation of the Powers, for a term of ten years, and not to be removable within this period. The Government duly proceeded to select two candidates for these Inspectorates, a Dutchman and a Norwegian, but its treatment of these gentlemen soon showed that in diplomacy, at any rate, the Young Turks had adopted the methods of Abd-ul Hamid. A clause was inserted in the Inspectors' contract of engagement, empowering the Government to denounce it at any moment upon payment of an indemnity of one year's salary—a flat violation of the ten years' term provided for under the scheme; and the list of "superior officials" was inflated until the patronage of the Inspectors, which, next to their irremovability, would have been their most effective power, was reduced to an illusion. The unfortunate nominees were spared the farce of exercising their maimed authority. They had barely reached their provinces when the European War broke out, and the Government promptly denounced the contracts and suspended the Scheme of Reforms, as the first step towards its own intervention in the conflict.

Thus, at the close of 1914, the Armenians found themselves in the same position as in 1883. The measures designed for their security had fallen through, and left nothing behind but the resentment of the

²³ See Annex A, the British White Book.

²⁴ The Delegation of 1912 was nominated by His Holiness the Katholikos of Etchmiadzin. Its President was His Excellency Boghos Nubar Pasha.

²⁵ The Ottoman Government, for statistical reasons, added the Vilayet of Trebizond to the original Six, the Moslem element being here in a sufficient majority to balance, to some extent, the Armenian majority in the rest.

Government that still held them at its mercy. The deportations of 1915 followed as inexorably from the Balkan War and the Project of 1914 as the massacres of 1895-6 had followed from the Russian War and the Project of 1878. Only in the execution of their revenge the Young Turks revealed all the sinister features of their dissimilarity to Abd-ul-Hamid. The Sultan, so far as he differed from the familiar type of Oriental despot, had been an opportunist in the tradition of Metternich—a politician of mature experience and delicate touch, unencumbered by any constructive programme to disturb the artistry of his game of finesse. He repressed the Armenians to a nicety after preparing for it eighteen years. The Young Turks were adventurers who had caught the catchwords of another generation and another school—the apes of Danton and Robespierre, and doctrinaires to the core. For the old anachronistic ascendancy of Moslem over Rayah, to the maintenance of which Abd-ul-Hamid had cynically devoted his abilities, they substituted the idea of Turkish nationalism, which clothed the same evil in a more

clearly-cut and infinitely more dynamic form. They were fanatics with an unreasoned creed, builders with a plan that they meant to carry through, and so no half-measures would content them, no inhibitions of prudence or humanity deter them from the attempt to realise the whole. Hindrances only exasperated them to sweeping action, and a blind concentration on their programme shielded them from doubts. "Our acts," Talaat Bey is reported to have said, in the interview quoted above, "have been dictated to us by a national and historical necessity. The idea of guaranteeing the existence of Turkey must outweigh every other consideration." The first of these sentiments is the pure-milk of the eighteenth century ideologues; there is a Prussian adulteration in the second, which smacks of more recent times. It is the voice of the youngest, crudest, most ruthless national movement in Europe, and the acts which it excuses and which the documents in this volume, describe were the barbarous initiation of the Near East into the European fraternity.

(To be continued)

The Hidden Thought

*This is the world!
A hellish globe of ingratitude, greed and infectious domination.
This is the world!
Swirling whirling with the common core of deviltry at which
Prince himself would cringe with witted horror!*

*Heaped upon the crust of third a mannerism born of mice and things,
All has blossomed forth to thirsting magnetism,
Sponging from what good there once may have been of man its treasured
Marrow of being—individuality, leaving in its wake a shell—
And a lesson.*

*How cruel this race of what once was man,
For as the fragrance of purity dies so to the mass must follow.
Unknown now the true laughter, the joyset warmth which coursed
Through their veins a year plus more ago.
Frightened, confused, emotionally disrupt they live on.
To disdainfully greet the coming day.*

*The hour, the year, to time itself existence exists.
No thought of truth to clan, living in fanciful elaboration,
Desiring, coveting all, the breath is carried on.
True man has died, ego lives; with the ego needless wants.
Material gain rules the sphere.
In ignorance they doze in confidence of sun-drenched days,
While the smiling, jovial Judas, thieves ability, thought and us
With competitive force.*

*This is society,
This is the world.*

HRAIR DERDERIAN

SITUATION IN THE CAUCASUS BETWEEN 1910 - 20

FROM THE MEMOIRS OF VAHAN PAPAZIAN

VAHAN PAPAZIAN

It was the political and military developments and the ensuing fights which created the republics of Azerbaidjan, Georgia and Armenia.

From the very first day of her independence—May 26, 1918—Georgia strove to occupy a central position in Transcaucasia, profiting from her favorable geographical position. The City of Tiflis, seemingly, was being converted into the capital of Transcaucasia.

These republics, at the very outset of their establishment, hastened to seize vast areas of contiguous territories at the expense of their neighbors, relying on force and adroitness—"he who is quick has a full stomach," according to the Armenian proverb. This psychology was apparent in the movements of both Georgia and Azerbaidjan.

Georgia seized the regions of Ardahan and Ardanoush and closed our road to the Plain of Jorogh leading to the Black Sea. By this move, Georgia became contiguous with Mohammedanized Ajaria. She also took steps to seize Akhalkalak and Akhalkukha whose Georgian population was negligible, and later still she tried to occupy the plain of Lori with its copper mines, but having been rebuffed by the Armenian army, she retired back to her frontier.

She carried on these territorial seizures both by armed force, conspiracy and economic pressure, without being touched by the famine, the epidemic and the internal Moslem stirrings within her "historic friend" of Armenia. On the contrary, she thought the moment was opportune to pounce on our throat, cutting off our road to Batum which was our only open door to Europe. She prevented us from obtaining oil from Baku and appropriated, almost wholly, the vast stores of food, materials and war supplies which had been left over from the Tsarist regime. And at one time, to cut the ground from under the Armenians, she launched an inhuman persecution both against the local, and especially the Turkish-Armenians, through mass imprisonments, exile and forced labor. At the same time she confiscated rich Armenian estates. Georgia even tried to close our schools, and the press, and even to assimilate the Armenians of the fringes. The object of all this was very plain, namely, to rid Georgia of all Armenians and to create a one-nation Georgia.

These were the adventures of the Georgian Social Democrat (Workers) Party and the government's "Democratic" Party, headed by Jordania and Ramishvilli.

The Georgians had lost their independence for more than one and a half cen-

tury, ever since 1802. Their loss of independence, however, had not killed their concept of state structure; they still preserved their government tradition and, by way of inheritance, their diplomatic and political maturity. Their racial temperament had been derived from the days of kings David and Vakhdant and Queen Tamar who had been supported by the so-called *Geniazes* (feudal lords) who constituted the political and military backbone of the royalty.

Undoubtedly, in addition to these national habits, their young generation had profited from the historic experience of the past. They were clever and flexible, endowed with a sharp political sense; masters in the art of psychologically preparing their opponent. Jealous guardians of their feudalistic dignity, they knew how to make their worth known and to carry through their fundamental aims.

The structure of our distinctive traits, on the other hand, was altogether different. Our loss of independence for six centuries and the loss of our nobility for three centuries had left no traces of the concept of governmental life and the old tradition. The yoke of the foreigner had cost us dearly both morally, and especially from the standpoint of political maturity. As to the political repressions and the persecutions, these had deprived us of either the time or the possibility of energetic activity.

Our leadership, forced into bloody battles for long years, was a unique, revolutionized generation, one-sided, reckless, rebellious and almost unready for political and diplomatic conceptions, their niceties and social sophistication.

For instance, scarcely we have approached a foreign political figure, without any red tape or the circumlocutory introductions, having assumed a tragic expression on our face, or sometimes a needless air of bravado, we pour out our bile, indigna-

tion and protest, and we often try to palliate the feelings of the diplomat by lurid descriptions of the blood and the suffering of "hapless Armenians." We confront them with demands in the name of "human rights and justice," and then, we get up and leave with a frown on our face.

Often, we too staged magnificent dinners and receptions for the foreigners from whom we expected something. During these affairs, often we sang the same song and the same tedious repetitions—the Armenian Case, the perpetrated atrocities.

Often the Georgians gave similar dinners and receptions, yet what a difference between theirs and ours!

On similar occasions, the Georgian never spoke of his ills and demands. On the contrary, he entertained and amused his guests with witty stories, proverbs, pleasant anecdotes from Georgian history and samples from Georgian writers, the culture, the folklore and the music. They staged attractive soirees, spiced with native costumes and dances, and distinguished beauties—often princesses—in waiting.

This is how the Georgians became known to political or military figures visiting the Caucasus, and in the employment of such methods, the Georgians reaped rich dividends. Unfortunately, we Armenians were "left-handed" in the use of such methods. We always began with stiff formality and ended with the same.

By such means the Georgians succeeded also in gaining sympathy among the socialists of the Third International which they used to their advantage. The Georgian Question, which did not exist from 1914 to 1919, was agitated and found a hearing largely through the efforts of the Socialists.

The Georgians had the advantage of us the Armenians, first because many of their Tsarist and revolutionary heroes were internationally-known figures, such as Tchukhenkeli, Tchukheitze, Dzereteli, Jordania,

Keketchkori and similar personalities. Second, the highly important significance of Georgia's geographical position, the beauty of the land and the natural resources which offered curiosity and interest to European inventors and which insured for Georgia political support.

During the war (First World War) the Georgians became Germanophiles, saved their country through the Germans, and after their defeat, by a gradual about face which was marked by finesse, they approached the Allies and renounced the Germans.

This role of transition from one loyalty to another, the Georgian "orthodox" socialists had committed to their nobility and the youth to prove to the Allied "bourgeois" governments that they cherished no class intolerance. The Georgian nobility in the Russian armies set to work, assisted by their families who in great part had been educated in Russian schools of the nobility, and had assimilated the life of the salon, together with the language, the dances and the music. This was the Georgian aristocracy which turned the heads of the Allied occupational army. It was this aristocracy which surrounded and astonished the newcomers with their open houses, their luxurious banquets and their receptions. I used to envy the Georgians for these charming qualities, something which unfortunately, we Armenians woefully lacked.

The Georgians are past masters in the art of good manners, the ability to establish friendly bonds, to become intimate and pleasing to strangers whom they decide to win over.

The disintegration of the nobility as a class began at the turn of the 19th century as the result of the ingenuity of the Russian viceroys who discovered the way to bankrupt it. They staged periodic dances, good time parties and nocturnal orgies in

the palace of the Viceroy continued for two-three years successively, until the Georgian nobility which had taken part in the revelries were dried clean, their lands were foreclosed, and finally, drained to the bone and bankrupt, they lost everything but their titles, and those of them who had been captured by their shining uniforms were assimilated in the Russian army.

It must be admitted that the Georgians are a highly advanced people in the realm of culture; they have a rich literature, a theater, public institutions and a high ranking intelligentsia.

And now a word about Azerbaijan. This newly-created state has no past. Apparently it was created as a buffer state against Russia and a security against the rich oil wells of Baku, artificially created by the British.

Once they became the masters of the land and their feet was firmly planted in the ground, the Azerbaijani appetites were "sharpened by eating." They tried to expand their boundaries, at first at the expense of the Armenians. They made Gandzak their capital and they tried to get hold of the whole of Karabagh through a thousand and one devious methods. They tried the method of sudden penetration. They were not satisfied with the acquisition of south-eastern and south-western Karabagh, and they tried, through the aid of their Turkish kinsmen, to also seize the mountainous regions (Nakhitchevan and Zangezour). Invisible to the naked eye, the British supported them in every corner. The Azerbaijanis tried to drive the Armenians to desperation, sometimes by direct military pressure. Turkish troops, officers of the army and political emissaries in particular, openly mingled with the Azerbaijani population and thus to become masters of the mountainous regions and the Valley of the Araxes. They seized the old Nakhitchevan and then continued their

advance as far as Sharour and the gates of Erivan.

On the other hand, they instigated the Tartars of Armenia to rise against us, to deprive us of our power of resistance. This included the Tartars of Beyouk Vedi, Agh-baba, Zangibazar, and to the north, the Tartars of Lake Chalder. Armenia was forced to use wood for fuel for its locomotives, because the Azerbaijani denied us access to the oil wells. This was the kind of "good neighbors" with which we were surrounded, neighbors 90 percent of whom were feudal lords and controlled two thirds of the land.

The tendency to unite with Turkey was very strong in Azerbaijan. Only a minority among the intelligentsia favored independent status. They had a university generation of youth, but the country was backward, the culture weak and worthless, because this university elect stood aloof from public interests. They were largely oil specialists.

In this setting the internal situation of the infant Armenian republic was far from viable. Surrounded by unfriendly and avaricious neighbors, Armenia was forced to exert superhuman efforts to withstand the blows from all sides. Deprived of direct contact with the civilized world, the economic life of our country largely depended on the friendly attitude of our neighbors. Turkey had closed all the roads to transit before us, Georgia had posted sentinels on the port of Batum, preventing the passage of a scrap of food or ammunition across the Armenian frontier. The Georgians even tried to scoop a share of the aid which the American government and humanitarian societies sent to Armenia to stop the ravages of the famine and the epidemic, and actually helped themselves, as transit toll, to the British military aid to Armenia. They seized 25 percent of a British consignment

of 40,000 rifles and a commensurate amount of ammunition.

We could at least have obtained food grain from northern Caucasus but our neighbors had closed all the doors before us. At that time Denikin's army dominated the north Caucasus and was threatening to invade Baku and Tiflis. Colonel Haskell of the American army, High Commissioner of Transcaucasia and representative of the International Peace Congress who had assumed his post in December of 1918, at the time was in Baku. Having lost all good sense, the newly-created republics of Georgia and Azerbaijan sought Col. Haskell's intervention to stop Denikin's army's onward march to Baku. Probably at the inspiration of Azerbaijan, Haskell succeeded in winning over the Armenian government to a plan of sending a delegation to Denikin to desist from his intention of invading the Transcaucasus.

As a result of this request, on December 2, 1919, Haskell sent a long telegram to Denikin which, in addition to the proposal of abandoning his plan to invade the Caucasus, was a covert threat.

At that time Denikin's invasion was deemed inevitable since, in his telegram of November 9, Denikin ordered the Russian officers of the Azerbaijani army to desert their posts in view of the Azerbaijani government's hostile attitude toward the "army of liberation," and in view of the Azerbaijani army's "perfidious threats in regard to Armenian territories!" A sort of parable of the wolf and the lamb.

Armenia was being suffocated within her narrow boundaries. Chivalrous Iran alone tried to soften our pain economically to a certain extent. The famine and the epidemic were working havoc in Armenia.

Not satisfied with this inhuman attitude, Azerbaijan, with the direct support of Turkey, had created sedition cells within Armenia, both in the center and the fringes.

Turkish and Azerbaijani emissaries and army officers swarmed in Tartar villages, distributing abundant quantities of arms and ammunition, enabling the latter to wage active war against Armenia right under the nose of Etchmiadzin and Erivan. Moreover, large numbers of Armenian pinks from Russia and Baku were infiltrating Armenia, carrying on subversive activities in their effort to overthrow the republic. Slowly, they paralyzed the economy of our country, undermined the morale of the army and corrupted the social structure. They generally encouraged the Tartar movements against our government and, having made the city of Alexandropol their headquarters, they created revolutionary cells all over the country.

Still untried, and imbued with an exaggerated democratic idealism, the leaders of Armenia were not ignorant of the covert movements of these internal maggots, but they considered persecution as a dangerous weapon, impermissible in "principle." The communist agents on the other hand, profiting from the government's tolerance, continued their nefarious work freely and with vigor, extending the "fraternal hand" to Mustafa Kemal. Needless to say, our tolerance was unpardonable, and later when the government wanted to stop the movement, it was already too late.

It must be stated that all the Armenian political parties were united in their condemnation of, and their resistance to the traitorous and ruinous subversion of those domestic Tartars and Communists. Unfortunately, however, this cooperation was short-lived; the Armenian passions were revived later and the task of carrying on the fight was perforce left to the Dashnaks.

In spite of the serious situation in and around Armenia, our people and their leaders exerted superhuman efforts and succeeded in confronting from day to day the steadily mounting political and eco-

nomic difficulties. Not a single gesture of recoiling, not a moment's vacillation in regard to our bright future.

We all had the firm faith that at last, and finally, we were approaching the beacon of our salvation. Armenia was about to see the realization of her dream; the two Armenias were to be united, the expatriated Armenians would return home and we would have a free and prosperous independent fatherland. We had forgotten the oppressive present, hopes were high and enthusiasm was unbounded. Were we not the "little ally" of our big Allies? Was it not true that notice has been served on all the world that small oppressed peoples would receive just restitution? Especially we were carried away by the prospect of the expansion of our boundaries. We had been promised nearly 90,000 square kilometers of Turkish Armenian territory to be annexed to Armenia.

Upon receipt of these news, our neighboring republics would say to us, maliciously, perfidiously or sarcastically: "Why do you cling so tenaciously to pitiful parcels of land such as Akhalkalak, Nakhitchevan or Karabagh? Why do you refuse to surrender them to us? Is it not true that you are going to acquire vast expanses of land from Turkish Armenia?" I do not know if they were laughing at us, or like us, they really believed that we would acquire those provinces. But we, waiting for that day together with our people, were rebuilding our ruins, were strengthening the economy of our country, and were getting ready to also claim our ancestral lands across the mountains.

Amid this enthusiastic setting, despite the grim reality—the famine and the epidemic—our war-torn Turkish Armenian homeland repeatedly changed hands. Our kinsmen of Vaspourakan, Taron and Karin (Erzeroum), in serried ranks, time and again abandoned the Araratian world and

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returned to their former villages and towns and again to rebuild, cultivate, sow the seed, build schools and establish local governments. This incomprehensible patriotism, pathological if you please, was so intense that even the terrors of the war were unable to make them abandon their homes and many of them died at the entrance of their huts.

They were going to "Yergir," the fatherland, with the firm conviction that, on the eve of the termination of the war, that land would be left to them. The idea of the independent fatherland was inextricably linked with the ownership of the land. They wanted to place the welders of the fate of the world before an accomplished fact.

This was the picture of the general situation when we received an invitation from Boghos Nubar Pasha to attend the national conference in Paris.

From Tiflis to Paris

In February of 1918 the Caucasus was still occupied by the Allies, chiefly the British. The entrances of all governmental and public buildings were guarded by twin sentinels, Indian soldiers with rifles with fixed bayonets. With huge turbaned hats, bronze-colored and with delicate features, lean and tall and with exceedingly expressive, fiery and searching eyes, these sentinels watched with a keen eye every move within sight. You had to shy away three to four paces, otherwise his sharp look would pierce you, ready to plunge his bayonet into your side.

The political and military commissar British sea captain Locke lived in the beautiful and finely furnished home of Hambartzoum Melikian. He was the man to see for a visa to Paris.

Although Nubar Pasha's invitation, with the knowledge of the British government, had been addressed to the name of "Western Armenian representatives," it was

quite impossible at once to call a convention of western Armenians in order to elect delegates. Our election was unconventional. We were elected in a gathering of the members of various western Armenian bodies in Tiflis. After considerable expressions of discontent and protest, for the lack of more suitable men, finally Terzibashian and I were elected, and we assented to go to Paris to represent the western Armenians at the national conference.

Only later (the beginning of February), after we had embarked on the ship, there took place in Erivan a "second convention of western Armenians," which (incidentally having condemned us) issued the following resolution in regard to Nubar Pasha's delegation:

3. To express full confidence in Boghos Nubar Pasha's first cabinet in the government of a Free and United Armenia.

Goes on record decisively, to establish one political state through the union of the two national and territorial (eastern and western) segments.

4. Imposes a duty on the elected Executive Body (western Armenian) to establish immediate contact with (Boghos Nubar Pasha's) cabinet in order to set into motion all the labors which are necessary for the establishment of a Free and United Armenia.

5. At the same time, imposes a duty on the elected Executive Body to take steps toward inducing the cabinet and the parliament of the ARARATIAN REPUBLIC to join in the declaration of the Free and United Armenia.

6. The resolution also demanded that the Allies give guarantees of Armenia's independence (free state).

Aharonian left Tiflis the first of January and we followed the very next day. While in Tiflis, at a meeting of party members, I had been advised of the Armenian government's instructions to Aharonian which

might be summed up in following two points:

A. To demand the Turkish Armenian provinces, with an exit to the Black Sea.

B. To cooperate with Nubar's delegation and, if necessary, make Nubar Pasha the President of the united delegation and Aharonian the Vice-President (reference to Republic of Armenia's delegation headed by Aharonian and the so-called Armenian National Delegation representing the Western Armenians, headed by Nubar Pasha.)

I now quote several passages from my diary of those days which, fortunately is still intact.

On my way to Paris, in Batum, for the first time I saw Armenian officers of the Turkish army who had fled when the Turks evacuated Batum. They were my former dear boys — Vahan Pasdermajian (the brother of Armen Garo), and Haig Quntuni. What all they told me from the massacres, the gallows, the piles of the dead bodies, the dishonored and defiled women, the fields filled with the dead bodies of children! They seemed like terrible, indignant creatures, dropped from another world. They had endured the awful ordeal with clenched teeth and choking throats, suppressing the cries of indignation which welled up within them. They each were bloodied but still living, martyred heroes.

They had lived as Turks—"We had become Ali, Arif or Mustafa," they said bitterly, tearful sparks flying from their eyes. Poor Vahan had assumed the Turkish name of Wahab, but he comforted himself with the thought that Vramian, too, had 'Wahab' for his pseudonym. There we saw Garo's sister who had witnessed untold atrocities. They had escaped as by a miracle and they kept warning us: "Do not be deceived by the Turks' serpent tongues and their snares; they have fooled many. They have pushed

to the fore Ahmed Riza and Sabaheddin so that they may pull the wool over your eyes and carry on their diabolical schemes. They have spread the rumor that the Turkish government alone was responsible for the massacres, but we can give you many proofs that their intellectuals, their military and the dignitaries of the provinces took an active part in those atrocities."

"Do not believe them, do not be fooled," they kept repeating to us.

New refugees came to us, one after another. There was no end to their terrible tales. They seemed to have an urge to tell endlessly, the most monstrous and heinous stories, it seemed they wanted to get it out off their chests. There was even a touch of irony in their narratives. "Those who had been Turkified," related Mooradian of Samson, "swore on the Koran that they had renounced the religion of the infidels and had adopted the true religion (Islam)".

I took my leave of these unfortunate survivors of the massacres and we boarded a huge Austrian passenger ship to continue our way to Paris. There were no other passengers on the ship except the Caucasian delegations.

At the dinner hour we met the Caucasian delegations. The Georgians, as usual, were unsocial, arrogant and haughty toward all others. Only the Azerbaijani Aghayev came to me as I was sipping my coffee after the dinner. He rolled his cyclopean eyes in a grimace of a smile and asked, "Do you know me?" He then seated himself beside me.

The two of us talked about Armeno-Georgian and Armeno-Azerbaijan relations, he starting the conversation. Aghayev was of the opinion that the Caucasian nationalities could insure their independence if they only entered into a confederation, preserving the while their national identity. In that case, he argued, the Caucasus will

have one central government and one parliament.

"A new Caucasian Sejm, so beautiful," I interrupted sarcastically.

"Why not?" he retorted. "All the disputes about territorial seizures will become irrelevant and worthless. Regions with mixed populations will elect their governments on the basis of equality. In Gandzak, for instance, the governor will be a Turk and his deputy will be an Armenian; in Shoushi it will be the exact opposite."

After he had explained to me his "practical" plan I asked him, "What about Baku? Will you be able to keep it as your capital?"

"Baku is lost for us," he replied. "The British are firmly rooted there. I think Baku and Batum, as the road to India, are important to the British."

— "What is your opinion of the territorial claims of the Turkish Armenians? I next asked.

"We agree that these territories should be separated and given to the Armenians, but of course you must not impose extreme demands, you must be flexible and must so limit your claims as to reconcile the Turks with their territorial losses. There will then be no need of resorting to armed force and the Armenians, in turn, will be in a position to defend their property. I insist," he added emphatically, "that Turkey, Armenia and the Caucasus must be united in federal bonds. You cannot remain forever enemies of the Turks because of the massacres. Fate has made us and the Turks your neighbors. Today Turkey is weak and disarmed, but tomorrow, who knows? She can again rise. Your present attitude is not a wise one."

He was breathless when he finished.

"But that way you would be putting a noose around our neck," I said laughingly. "We would not want to have that happen to us."

"There's nothing you can do about it," he replied cynically. "That is your fate. What do you propose to get rid of that noose?"

I naturally did not satisfy his curiosity. Aghayev was very much afraid that the Caucasian delegations would again revive the old feuds before the Paris Peace Conference, accusing one another.

"It seems you will say the Turks massacred so many Armenians and burnt so many villages," he pointed out to me. "If you do, we will say the same thing about you and there is no end to this. We must first agree among ourselves and appear at the conference as a united front, defending our independences."

This was the view of Aghayev, the famous butcher of Baku, noted intellectual and journalist of the Azerbaijani. He later remained in Turkey, changed his name to Agha-Oghlu Ahmed, and became a zealous member of Mustafa Kemal's Grand National Assembly.

On our arrival in Istanbul, the minute the Georgians had disembarked they disappeared, while the Azerbaijani, having been advised that we first had to appear at the British embassy, out of a large number of luggage boxes which they had brought with them, they selected certain few and hustled it off in the dark to an unknown place. Obviously the contents of these mysterious boxes did not inspire any confidence. Meanwhile the Georgians had been told by the British embassy to wait for the Armenian delegation. The Georgians were not aware that the Azerbaijani, too, had sent a delegation.

The first man who had come to meet us in Istanbul was Dr. Davidian who embraced us with tearful eyes and with an effusion of nostalgic emotion led us first to the British embassy and then to the Tokatlian Hotel. Dr. Davidian was a re-

finer, gentle and kind-hearted man, an indefatigable public worker, of impeccable character and endowed with high moral virtues. During the last phase of the Armenian reforms he had been chairman of the National Central Board. He was not a party member, was a friend to everybody and noted in them only unselfishness, integrity and unreserved dedication.

The second man to meet me was Sdepan Effendi Karayan, my friend of the first years of the Constitution (the Ottoman Constitution of 1908) era. He embraced me and cried over our shattered and defiled hopes. In a sobbing voice he recalled our cooperation in the National Central Board and especially in the council to insure the reforms. In his early seventies, a lean and bony figure, he was an influential jurist member of the Ottoman court, meanwhile a fearless champion of the Armenian cause.

The Istanbul of the "Constitution" was in mourning. Deeply immersed in mourning were also the Armenian youth and the intellectuals of Istanbul. How could one forget the loss of our intellectual elite who had been paraded in chains before the pack of bloody hyenas on their way to distant dark ravines, there to be cut in pieces with diabolical delight!

I passed through many unknown streets, before houses and coffee clubs, but nowhere could I see a familiar smiling face. Here was the spacious coffee room of the famous Tokatlian Hotel in the Pera quarter of the city where Aknouni, Zartarian, Zohrab, Garo and Vramian, Siamanto, Shahrigian and others frequented, and I, seated in a corner, used to wait for them to be refreshed by their conversation. That was the most lively period in the agitation of the question of Armenian reforms. We often met here to exchange views.

And now, it seemed the whole of Istanbul was a desolate place, not only for us newcomers, but for all Armenians. The

traces of the great national holocaust and the universal grief were visible on all Armenian faces, as if a great and prosperous family had been wiped off by a great fire with a solitary survivor, seated on the ruins.

I seldom met my old acquaintances in the streets, and when I did, they were incredulous with surprise. "Was it really I? Where had I been all this time? How had I escaped the awful massacres? How much I had changed! Where did I come from and where was I going? This shower of questions, uttered incoherently and tinged with deep emotion would deeply stir my soul. And when I would tell them that I was going to Paris on a mission, they were agape with amazement. "Really? Is Armenia free? Is it true that we have an independent republic, an army, cannons and guns and ministers? Is it really true that we shall recover our territories from the Turks?" A shower of questions through tears of joy!

The next day being Sunday I wanted to call at the Galata Church where the Central Armenian College of Istanbul and the National Assembly Hall were located. Once in the church, I wanted to remain incognito. The choir was singing the Armenian *Der Voghormya*—Lord God have mercy on us—as the heavy smoke of the sweet incense slowly rose up in curling waves. So piteous was the melody that one would have to be a stone to restrain his tears. The hall of the Armenian National Assembly was within the church compound and I wondered where were my good old friends, my companions in idealism, who were welding a new Armenian life.

Mr. Der Andreasian, a member of the Armenian National Assembly, was in the church at the time. He slowly approached me and aroused me out of my painful reverie. Tenderly he took hold of my arm and led me to the diocesan assembly room.

Others came one by one, and presently, again the same endless harassing questions. It was up to me to inspire them with fresh hopes in regard to the future of our people and our fatherland. I gave them a full description of the blessings of our republic—even if I had departed from Tiflis, without stopping at Erivan—the settlement of Turkish Armenian refugees, the redevelopment of the country, etc. etc.

Transported with bliss, reverently and rapt, they would listen to me as if they were listening to the tolling of the bells of the fatherland's glorious holiday.

The Tokatlian Hotel is one of the outstanding hotels of the city, a rendezvous for distinguished personalities. Our coming was already known to all civic and national leaders, as well as old friends. One of them to call on me was Garabed Bishop Eutujan. He was a powerfully built man who was conscious of his worth, and whom I had the honor of seeing for the first time. He was the Prelate of London. He was very enthusiastic over the newly-created republic of Armenia and had faith in her future but he was offended that Boghos Nubar Pasha had slighted him in not inviting him to the "national conference."

Of greater importance was my meeting with Bekir Sami. The two of us had been friends when he was Vali (Governor) of Van. Tall, broad-shouldered and handsome and now in his sixties, this Circassian had been very kind to me and my companions. He was in Istanbul at the time without a portfolio. He was very pessimistic about the fate reserved for Turkey. "These swines will never become men," he said scornfully, speaking of the Turks. "How lucky you are that at last your dream of independence has come true; but what are we Circassians going to do? In 1878 they uprooted us from our Caucasian mountains, and with great promises, dumped us in the regions of Tokat and Cilicia, they de-

liberately scattered us so that we would not become a dangerous power for them. I have a mind to take advantage of this favorable situation and make a political issue of the Circassian case, at least a reassembly of the Circassians and an internal autonomy. What do you say? Can the Armenians be useful to us? You have big ties among the political circles and enjoy great sympathy, surely you can be useful. Later, when you claim your territories from Turkey, we will support you against the Turks."

This was the way my friend talked to me. One year later, this same Bekir Sami became foreign minister in Kemal's cabinet, and he not only forgot the Circassian cause but, as a fanatical Turkish chauvinist, he used to send threatening notes to the government of Armenia.

Without rousing suspicion I tried to locate some of the authors of the Armenian massacres: Dr. Raschit and Pirinji-zade-Fevzi from Tigranocerta, Hodja Ilias from Moush, Djeddet from Vaspourakan. But all my efforts proved vain. There was no trace of them in Istanbul and, I think, they had been exiled to the Island of Malta.

In the evening I was invited to the home of Dr. V. Torkomian to give a report on the structure of the Armenian Republic, her present activity and plans for the future, as well as the aims of the National Conference called by Nubar Pasha. Dr. Torkomian had invited all the prominent leaders and intellectuals who had survived the massacres. The Doctor himself had been exiled but he had been released through the intervention of Crown Prince Abdul Medjit and had returned to Istanbul.

My report, including the answers to their innumerable questions, their sincere criticisms and suggestions, especially their demands against the Turks, consumed the time till midnight. One thing was plain

that these belabored Armenians were not living in the present, but they were weaving bright and rosy dreams of the future, hopeful of finding rest in a safe, united fatherland. Their gloomy faces brightened with full hope and faith in the labors of the leaders of Armenia and of the dispersion, these men took their leave with lighter

hearts.

We had to leave for Paris where the conference was to open on February 24. Since the Eastern Express had ceased operating, we had to travel by sea. A few days later we departed from Contanza on a small Rumanian ship headed for Marseilles.

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Three Verses

V. DURGARIAN

Lucifer's Train:

Over cool rivers and twisting ravines,
I drifted many starry nights when Heavens
embraced me,
Amidst spiral shells, and sweet lotus beds,
Until I came to a stony inscription.

Upon a tablet, a bronze gilded in gold,
of voluptuous form, a Chinese God,
with stern flaming sword and dragon tips,
asked who I am.
No Ming's temple, no royal bed,
I answered no recalcitrant, a yeoman not
to demon wed.

A tempest raged.
The earth trampled with thunder;
spat fire and steam.
A python lurking coiled in slimy forest
seized its prey
which in shrieks appealed to Heaven.
A caravan of bony men
creeping slowly, with white ribs, skeleton
like legs,
carried on their sagging shoulders bamboo
poles,
knotted and knotted, into squares and
squares upon which,
the pinnacle, the devil sat musing,
grinning and grinning,
in his hands a playful lizard of bony scales
blowing orange flames, hissing and hissing.

Rain was blinding, Heavens had lost me,
I shouted 'Oh God'
Then slender vines carried me to the
peaceful valley
from which I came no more.

The Pantheist's Avowal:

In whirling trance from that archaic flute
sounding senseless tunes
through rusty hollows and shabby woods
I recoiled deafened.

Senseless and mute,
shut forever from gleaming stars
which applauded my aspiring mood,
I fell prostrated.

But Pan
thy song inspired
some laughter
at my awkward manner.

Like paper puppet,
Harlequin mocked,
pulled by threads unseen,
I now appeared
upon a ready and colorless stage
to act
where drumless ears and sightless eyes
profess to hear and watch
my comic farce.

The Theist's Avowal:

(LAUS DEO)

*Not to aspire to madness
like Caius Caesar impelling worship of self
in extravagant temples of dazzling white
stones*

*and lustrous gems from minions of his
realm;*

*nor encomiums undeserved by deeds vile
gained from other man's pain;
nor throats pressed*

*until eyes bulge, breath ceases by demon
hands.*

*But chant celestial from empyrean vaults
to stir my soul,*

*and with wide open eyes, parted lips
trembling,*

I weep as I gaze at the Cross.

ARTAVAZT III AND ROMAN PERFIDIES

NOUBAR MAXOUDIAN

Artavazt III (55-34 B.C.) was one of the most noble characters of the Artashid Kingdom of ancient Armenia. As the son of Tigranes the Great he was an imposing monarch; as a patron of letters and as a chronicler he has been immortalized by Greek scholars and the praises of foreign historians.

The exact date of Artavazt's accession to the throne has been told us by the celebrated Roman orator and historian Cicero who writes that, when Crassus arrived in the East in 54 B.C. the Armenian throne was occupied by King Artavazt. And speaking of Tigranes the Great, in his speech delivered in February of 56 B.C. he expressly has stated, "He is still king." Therefore, it is certain that Artavazt ascended the throne in 55 B.C.

Memnon and Plutarch relate that at a certain period Artavazt was co-occupant of the throne with his father Tigranes. This could have happened after the Battle of Tigranocerta in 69 B.C. when the discouraged and tired old Tigranes needed an assistant, little trusting longer the stratagist of Pontus, the unprincipled and cunning King Mithridates Eupator.

Langlois even mentions the existence of a coin showing the twin crowned heads of Tigranes and Artavazt with the Greek inscription: Vasileus Tigranu (King Tigranes), proving that Artavazt was a joint ruler with his august father.

Artavazt III was an erudite and highly intellectual king. In his childhood years his illustrious father had invited to his court noted Greek scholars who served as tutors and daily companions of Artavazt. As a result, the talented crown prince himself started to produce literary, dramatic and historical works which were preserved until the second century. (See "Crassus", Plutarch's Lives). Somewhere else Plutarch writes: "During the period of the Artashids a highly cultured literary taste prevailed among the higher Armenian classes and this is confirmed by the dramatic plays which were staged at Tigranocerta and Artashat. (Ibid, "Crassus" and "Lucullus".)

While his father was still alive Artavazt had plenty of leisure to occupy himself with his cherished literary studies, but after his father's death when the throne of the whole of Greater Armenia was left to him, he was obliged to take up the sword and become entangled with the Roman-Parthian disputes. Armenia's immediate neighbors at the time were the Romans and the Parthians, who always involved Armenia with either one or the other in their mutual rivalries.

Before Artavazt the kings of Armenia comparatively speaking were much more at ease since the rear of Armenia was protected by a number of independent or semi-independent Asiatic kingdoms against

Rome, while the Seleucid kingdom on the southern frontiers posed as a strong barrier against the Parthian imperialists. Thus, Armenia was secure against both Roman and Parthian invasions.

In the days of Artavazt these surrounding independent kingdoms had been obliterated and the King of Armenia was regarded as the strongest king of rightmost Asia. Nevertheless, it was difficult for Armenia to cross swords with both Rome and Parthia at the same time, even as the Romanophile Plutarch has admitted. Often the King of Armenia was obliged to lean on either side, but this policy, while making a friend of one, inevitably made an enemy of the other. When Rome still had not attained a position of supremacy in the East Armenia could cross swords with Parthia and defeat her, when Roman influence became dominant in the East the kings of Armenia were obliged sometimes to do their bidding. Thus, after the death of Tigranes the Great, Armenia became a bone of contention between the two mighty neighbors (See Strabo).

The Armenian kings generally were inclined toward the Romans, but the ungrateful Roman generals always tried to throw the responsibility upon the Armenian kings whenever they were defeated by the Parthians.

The latter sometimes stooped so low that, pretending to be friendly, and after exchanging the brotherly kiss, they would arrest the Armenian kings and would conspire against their lives. The best example of this was the attitude of Triumvir Mark Anthony toward Artavazt.

Even Cicero admits that Artavazt was a friend of Rome. It was in proof of this friendship that Artavazt gave his beautiful daughter in marriage to King Diodorus of Galatia who was a Romanophile. An idealist like Artavazt knew how to respect the

treaty of friendship between his father and Pompey in 66 B.C.

As a matter of principle, Artavazt hated the Parthians who lost no opportunity to whittle off the bordering provinces of Armenia.

In the seventh year of his reign Artavazt had won a brilliant victory over the Parthians. It was on this occasion that he struck the silver coin symbolizing his victorious return. Such a coin already has been discovered and there might be similar others advising of Artavazt's other unknown victories. These silver coins bore a very refined stamp. They show Artavazt standing in his chariot of three or four horses, holding in his hand the victor's trophy, speeding to new victories or returning from a fresh victory. The other side of the coin shows his handsome beardless face, the royal diadem on his head, with the Greek inscription: "To the King of Kings Artavast."

Artavazt, as a hater of Parthians, had come to the aid of Triumvir Crassus upon the latter's arrival in Assyria in 54. In doing so he wanted to weaken the Parthians. The assertion that Artavazt deceived Rome is a gross error which unfortunately some historians have advanced.

When Crassus arrived in Assyria Artavazt paid him a visit with his personal guard of 6000 horsemen, and as a discreet soldier and the ally of Rome, he gave the Triumvir some timely advice about his campaign. He proposed that the Roman army march through Armenia and promised to aid the Triumvir with 10,000 horsemen, 30,000 infantry and an auxiliary force of 6,000 heavy armed cavalry. He even offered to command the Armenian force personally. Armenia would supply the food and the necessities of the Roman army as long as they were in the land.

Crassus at first thanked Artavazt but

preferring to follow his original plan he decided to attack the Parthians alone. According to Plutarch, he did this to satisfy his personal vanity because his battles would be the first in the long-drawn Romano-Parthian conflict.

In 53 B.C. Crassus crossed the Euphrates and attacked the Parthians in Mesopotamia. The latter were ready for him, having divided their army into two parts, the first under the command of King Vorot who first invaded Armenia as the ally of Rome. The second part under the command of Suren, reinforced by Arabian contingents, marched against Crassus, and finding him alone jeopardized his whole army. Crassus was obliged to march through the waterless desert, sustaining fearful losses.

Meanwhile Artavazt who was engaged with King Vorot, sent messengers to Crassus advising him that he would be unable to come to his aid since he was busy defending the country against the Parthians. The Armenian ambassadors suggested that Crassus retreat to Armenia where their united force could easily defeat the Parthians. Crassus would not listen to Artavazt's advice, and instead of rectifying his military blunder, he sent word to Artavazt saying, "I have no time to busy with the Armenians but when I settle my score with the Parthians I will come to Armenia and punish Artavazt (see Plutarch).

When Artavazt's ambassadors returned to Armenia and told him what Crassus had said he was exceedingly distressed and at once made peace with the Parthians. In doing so, Artavazt naturally was working for the best interests of Armenia. The fault was Crassus' who had scorned Artavazt's advice and had insulted him. Under similar circumstances the Romans would have done the same thing but much more quickly. Had Crassus heeded the advice of the Armenian king he would have won the

war and would have evaded the danger which threatened both his army and Armenia. His short-sighted arrogance cost him his army of 30,000 as well as his life. The Parthians cut off his son's head and threw it into his camp. Then they cut off his head and sent it to Armenia as a present to King Vorot who at the time was celebrating his wedding with one of the daughters of Artavazt.

In the ensuing Romano-Parthian wars Artavazt always remained neutral. The Parthians continued their victorious march on to Assyria and Palestine while Artavazt always kept a hands-off policy. Not a single serious-minded historian has ever even remotely referred to his participation. Even the suspicious Cicero, perceiving Artavazt's absolute neutrality, openly declared, "The Armenians were neutral and would side neither with the Romans nor the Parthians."

After Crassus, Mark Anthony the Triumvir came to the East in the year 36 B.C., and according to Gardhausen, with an army of 100,000 marched against the Medes and the Parthians. At this time Artavazt was his strongest ally. As he had done to Crassus, the King of Armenia gave sound advice to Mark Anthony and cheerfully promised, by way of beginning, to put at his disposal an Armenian force of 6000 mounted and 7000 foot soldiers. Plutarch puts the number of the promised cavalry at 16,000, which proves that Artavazt was really an ally of Rome. The historian Rawlinson, too, considers Artavazt as Rome's ally. "In the winter Artavazt was on Rome's side, having promised 7000 footmen and 6000 horsemen as an auxiliary force." (See Rawlinson, *Parthia*, p. 207).

Anthony, like Crassus, made a mistake and without heeding the Armenian King's advice divided his army into two parts. He committed the greater share of his supplies and the war machines to the care of

Oppius Statius while he himself marched against Praada, the capital of Media. (See Ammianus).

The Parthian king Hrahat IV and the Median king Artavazt surprised Statius and destroyed his army. They put to the sword 10,000 Roman soldiers and took a larger number of prisoners, destroyed all the Roman war machines and seized a rich booty. Statius himself was killed in the encounter.

The news of this major disaster flashed like a lightning and when Anthony, who at the time was in Media, heard it he was frightened and beat a hasty and shameful retreat with fearful losses. He took his breath in Armenia where he reformed and rested his disorganized army. Anthony was terribly afraid he might share the fate of his predecessor Crassus. In this calamity Artavazt was the companion of Anthony and the friend of Rome. But, alas, Anthony was to repeat the perfidy of Crassus.

Dion Cassius and Plutarch relate that when Artavazt saw this defeat he was forced to withdraw his army into Armenia and make preparations to recuperate Anthony's discomfited army. "The Armenian King cordially received Anthony," writes Rawlinson, "and aided him with his crack cavalry and infantry." (Ibid, pp. 208-209).

If Artavazt had been the enemy of Anthony and the friend of the Parthians he could easily have retired to Armenia and chased the shattered Roman army from his frontiers. There was no one who could stop him. However, Artavazt hastened to his aid with an armed force, welcomed him in his country, and spared him neither funds nor supplies. And yet Anthony, this effeminate Roman, in the cold of the Winter, and having forgotten his duties, hastened to Sidon where his mistress was waiting.

Mark Anthony was such a coward and

a liar that he sent messengers to Rome from Sidon announcing to the Senate his imaginary victories, whereas the wounded of his shattered army were being cared for by the Armenian King in Armenia. This base slander on the character of Artavazt unfortunately was given credence and was promoted by Plutarch.

There is not an iota of proof that Artavazt betrayed Rome. "There is not even one trace of Armenian perfidy," writes Gardhausen. (See p. 294). While Mommsen in his *Romisch Geschichte* (V. p. 364) writes: "The man who was responsible for the plan of the war was not Artavazt but Anthony himself." Gutshmid, too, favors Artavazt when he writes: "This charge is as stupid as it is difficult to prove." (*Geschichte ofte Iran*, p. 107). Mommsen confirms the same idea; "The cause of the accident of Anthony and the failure of the siege of Praada WAS NOT THE ARMENIAN." (See Vol. V. pp. 367-368).

The Romans chronicler Tellius, whose work has been lost, has written about the invasions of Mark Anthony and Armenia's attitude toward him. His book served as the source of other ancient historians, such as Strabo, Plutarch, etc. From childhood Tellius was a very dear friend of Mark Anthony and when he grew up Anthony made him a comrade in arms and lavished great honors upon him. In the light of this friendly tie we can readily understand the value of his works, for his work was copied by many historians, and if, like others, he tried to represent the Armenian King as a traitor, he did this simply under the compulsion of justifying Anthony. In this connection Mommsen justly observes: "Tellius' legacy is a very poor attempt to justify a defeated general (Mark Anthony). The principal causes of Anthony's defeat were: 1. his failure to heed Artavazt's advice, 2. his faulty strategy, 3. the shortage of the Roman army's food and water supply,

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4. the enemy's unerring shower of arrows."^{*}

But, Anthony had only one desire—to seek a scape goat—a traitor. Otherwise, how could he cover up his shameful defeat? With this aim, he first had the King of Cappadocea beheaded as a traitor (see Mommsen). Then he put to death King Hamelikos of Edessa, according to Dio Cassius. It was now the turn of Artavazt the "traitor."

In the year 35 B.C. Anthony stayed with Cleopatra and decided to prepare a second Parthian invasion in order first to punish the King of Armenia. While Anthony insisted on Artavazt's "perfidy," he knew very well that the latter always wanted to help the Romans, despite Octavius' secret letters inciting him against Anthony. (See Dio Cassius, 49 and 41).

Pretending friendship, Anthony perfidiously invited Artavazt to Alexandria ostensibly to consult with him about the Parthian invasion, but secretly planning to arrest him. Distrusting Anthony, Artavazt refused to go. Anthony invited him the second time, this time ostensibly to solicit the hand of Artavazt's daughter for his son Alexander. Artavazt again did not trust him. A last attempt was made in the spring of 34. At the head of a large army Anthony suddenly marched to the City of Nicopolis in Lesser Armenia and from here he sent his beloved friend and Historian Tellius to Artavazt, to tell him that Anthony needed his advice in his forthcoming campaign against Parthia. Upon this final refusal Anthony marched into Armenia. (See Appian). Rawlinson confirms this entire version. (See *Parthia*, p. 215).

Anthony halted his army when quite close to Artavazt and invited him to his camp. He tried to lure the Armenian King by every possible means, the intervention

of friendly kings, friendly and reassuring letters, etc. Finally Artavazt gave in.

When Artavazt saw the "friendly" Roman army was knocking at the gates of his capital, and when he learned his cognate King Artavazt of Media had deserted his Parthian allies and had joined Anthony, finally in desperation he went to Anthony. The latter embraced him but instantly arrested the poet king and unfortunate monarch of Armenia. (See Tacitus). Immediately upon his arrest, the hungry Romans pillaged Armenia as Tacitus testifies.

The bewildered Armenians immediately proclaimed Artavazt's son Artashesh who had barely escaped the Romans as their king. (See Dio Cassius, Josephus and Rawlinson). Josephus writes that Artashesh was a captive in Alexandria but later he had escaped to Armenia where he was at once crowned king. Rawlinson says Artashesh was crowned in his father's chamber.

The Romans looted defenceless Armenia, not even sparing the temple of Anahit the Goddess. They shattered the huge golden statue of the Goddess and divided the metal among themselves. (See Pliny, Garhausen and Mommsen).

Artashesh tried to assassinate the cowardly Anthony but he was suddenly besieged and he scarcely escaped to the Parthian court where he was cordially welcomed by King Hrahat. The Parthians were more generous to him than the degenerated Roman Triumvir who was supposed to be a friend, an ally and a civilized man.

Unfitting to his dignity, Anthony had Artavazt, his queen and his sons put in golden and silver chains, and having seized vast riches he departed to Alexandria to join his beloved Mistress Cleopatra, leaving behind some Roman regiments to occupy the country. (See Dio Cassius). Meanwhile, he made a gift of the Armenian

^{*} Another major cause might be considered Anthony's licentious trait.—EDITORS.

Province of Simbak to King Artavazt of Media.

Anthony and Cleopatra subjected the Armenian king and his family to many indignities. Anthony had them brought to the amphitheater where his Mistress Cleopatra was seated on a golden throne. With promises of freedom and various inducements Anthony tried to persuade the Armenian prisoners to admit submission to Cleopatra as the "Queen of Queens." But Artavazt, despite his chains, remembered that he, too, was a "King of Kings," and was the son of the "King of Kings" Tigranes the Great and of God. He was neither impressed nor lured by Anthony's promises and never stooped to acknowledge the supremacy of Cleopatra, always loyal to the proud Artashid spirit.

Neither Artavazt nor his Queen, nor his courtiers, nor the Armenian nobility uttered one word of importunity nor showed the slightest sign of servility. They never knelt before Cleopatra but simply called her by her name.

Because of their proud stand the Armenian King, his family and the princes were subjected to bitter hardships and sufferings until the Battle of Actium which took place in 30 B. C. (See Dio Cassius and Gardthausen.) In this battle Anthony and Cleopatra were badly defeated by Octavius. This great Triumvir claimed as the fourth cause of this important war Anthony's perfidy toward King Artavazt. (See Dio Cassius).

Upon their defeat at Actium, Anthony and Cleopatra immediately fled to Alexandria where they learned that Octavius, in accordance with the wishes of the people of Rome, intended to free Artavazt, whereupon, Cleopatra immediately had Artavazt beheaded and sent the head to Artavazt's enemy King Artavazt of Media as a present, in expectation of his military aid.

The real motive of this dastardly murder is admitted by many historians. Dio, Strabo, Tacitus, Vellius Paterculus, Josephus, Plutarch and Gardthausen, in relating the heinous act, point out the degeneracy and the base character of Artavazt's enemies. The people of Rome proclaimed Anthony's perfidy as an "ineradicable stain" and a "crime", and so wrote the famous Roman historian Tacitus.

Thus perished one of the most amiable figures of Armenian history who had the misfortune of meeting a shameless and degenerated Roman who commemorated his base victory on his coins. On a silver coin are seen the twin heads of Anthony and Cleopatra, with the submissive Armenian royal crown and the bow and arrow, and with the Latin inscription: "Anthony. Armenia Conquered. Cleopatra Queen of kings and sons of kings." Another similar coin shows the victor and his prisoners, the images of a wolf and his twins, with the Greek inscription "Armenia."

Artavazt, the unforgettable king, was the victim of a perfidious Roman, the faithless and dastardly Mark Anthony.

● FOR RESEARCHISTS:

DATES OF FOUNDING OF HISTORIC ARMENIAN CHURCHES

K. BASMADJIAN

We give below a chronological list of the founding of principal churches in various parts of Armenia:

1. The Cathedral of Etchmiadzin founded in—A.D.

2. The Church of St. Sarkis (Holy Trinity?) of Dekor (Krikor) built by Prince Sahak Kamsarakan in 486-500, before he became the patriarchal Lord of Shirak.

3. The church of St. Hovhanness (St. John) of Ererook (Kizil Kouleh), built in the latter part of the 5th century.

4. The cathedral of Yeghivard built by Catholicos Movses II of Yeghivard in 574-604.

5. The St. Gregory Church of Dovin, built in 606-611.

6. The small chapel in the citadel of Ani, built by Abisolom Vardapet in 622.

7. The St. Illuminator Church of Ardik, seventh century.

8. The Cathedral of Bakaran (Bakran), started in 624 and completed in 631 through the sponsorship of Prince Poot and his sister Anna.

9. St. Ananias of Alaman (Alem), 637.

10. Holy Cross of Mutzkhet, 619-639.

11. St. Hovhanness (St. John) of Bakavan (Youch Kilisseh), 638.

12. The Cathedral of Mureni, 638-640.

13. The Cathedral of Mastara, 640.

14. The Church of Zuvartnotz, built by Catholicos Nerses III in 654.

15. The Cathedral of Arooj (Tashish) built by Prince Krikor Mamikonian (presumably in 622-685) and his wife Heghine in 668.

16. The Church of Holy Asdvadzadzin of Talin, built by Nerseh Apohipat, Patrician of Shirak and Lord of Asharounis, in 690.

17. St. Sdepannos (St. Stephens) of Akarak (Ekrek), built in the 5th century.

18. St. Hovhanness (St. John) of Karakilisseh, built in the 5th century.

19. The church of Panak (Penek), 8th century.

20. The church of Khachkound of Otzoon (Ouzunla), built in 735.

21. St. Minas of Horomos (Ghoshavank), founded in the 8th or 9th century.

22. The church of Ishkhan, 9th century.

23. The Holy Trinity (?) of Eoshk, 9th century.

24. St. Gregory of Khakhoo, 9th century.

25. Holy Savior of Shirakavan (Bash Sheorekel), the latter part of the 9th century.

26. Holy Asdvadzadzin of Oghuzulu, 9th century.

27. St. Paul and Peter of Datev, 9th century.

28. St. Nishan of Hazbat, 10th century.

29. The church of Amenapurgich of Sanahin, 10th century.

30. St. Hovhanness (St. John) of Horomos, 10th century.

31. St. Paul of Marmashen (Ganlucha), 10th century.

32. The Church of the Holy Apostles of Ani, 10th century.

33. St. Minas of Khudzogonk (Besh Kilisseh), 10th century.

34. The Cathedral of Ani, started in the 10th century and completed in the 11th century.

35. St. Gregory of Ani, built by King Gagik I in the 11th century.

36. Holy Asdvadzadzin of Dzubni, 11th century.

37. The Church of the Holy Apostles of Kars, 11th century.

38. St. Hovhanness (St. John) of Ani (Kiz Kala), 12th century.

39. St. Elijah of Ani, 12th century.

40. Holy Geghard of the Monastery of Ayri, 12th century.

41. Holy Asdvadzadzin of Dusegh, 12th century.

42. St. Gregory the Illuminator of Ani,

built by Honents Dickran, 13th century.

43. St. Hovhanness (St. John) of Gandzasar, 13th century.

44. Holy Asdvadzadzin of Khoranashat, 13th century.

45. St. Garabet of the Monastery of Hovhanness, 13th century.

Editorial Note—In his Armenian Atlas the late historian Basmadjian has omitted the small village of Oshakan, ancient province of Arakadzodn, some 12 kilometers to the north of Etchmiadzin, where Vahan Amattouni, the Hazarapet of Armenia, built the present church in 437 A.D. In this church rest the remains of St. Mesrop, the inventor of the Armenian alphabet. This church was renovated in its present magnificent form by Catholicos Gevorg IV, a native of Constantinople. This Catholicos was also the founder of the Gevorgian Jemaran (Seminary), 1874, which houses a printing press and a rich library of precious Armenian manuscripts.

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THE FORMATION OF THE ARMENIAN INDEPENDENT REPUBLIC

DR. VAHE A. SARAFIAN
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The Transcaucasian Seym-Formation

While scoring encouraging gains on the military front, the Ottoman Turkish state did not forsake the diplomatic front, but increased its pressure on the Armenians through negotiations with the Transcaucasian Confederation. After the success at Erzeroum on February 27, 1918 (when the Armenian defense forces were forced back in retreat), the Turks began a general diplomatic effort to destroy the morale of the Caucasian Armenians. They very cleverly manoeuvred the Caucasian Armenians into difficulties and involvements in Transcaucasian Confederation politics and hostilities.

The Transcaucasian Commission was unable to reconcile the differing national orientations of the three major Transcaucasian peoples, the Georgians, the Azerbaidjanian Tatars, and the Eastern (Caucasian) Armenians. Within the Commission itself, cooperation was merely official, not of spirit. Georgian nationalism and socialism could not readily compromise with Armenian desires for friendly relations with Russia so that Russia might help preserve the Transcaucasus from Turkish imperialism.

The Armenians were in desperate straits, with most of the nationality slain, dead of starvation or disease, enslaved in Turkish

harems or "orphanages," or scattered as refugees on the point of death from recurrent epidemics of cholera and typhoid or from sheer exhaustion and starvation. Western Armenia was a shambles, deserted of its population in large part. The Caucasian Armenians, as the major remnant of the nation, sought desperately to keep the Turkish forces from entering the Caucasus, for it was believed that Turkish occupation would mean the final and complete extinction of the Armenian nation.

Georgia, though closely related to Armenia by race, culture, religion, and national tradition, not having faced Turkish massacre as yet, sought to negotiate its national interests. Azerbaidjan, dominated by the Pan-Turanian oriented Musavat Party, actively pursued a policy of accommodation with Turkey, for Azerbaidjan and Turkey, though of differing Moslem sects, shared similar language, political attitudes, and an anti-Christian prejudice.

On February 23, 1918, the Transcaucasian Commission was augmented as the government of Transcaucasia by the formation of an elective legislature, and the Confederation government thus was completely legalized as an administrative and legislative force separate from the Bolshevik-dominated All-Russian Government. The failure of the All-Russian Constitu-

tional Assembly to establish itself as the legislature of the Russian Empire made the formation of such a Transcaucasian Seym (Assembly) imperative.

The All-Russian Background

In December, 1917, the Bolshevik regime had utilized every means at its disposal to assure popular victory for the Social-Democratic Bolshevik Party and its associated Socialist-Revolutionaries of the Left in elections for the Constitutional Assembly which would supplant provisional government by a permanent, constitutional, legal regime. In the voting, however, the population of the Russian Empire had successfully rejected Bolshevik control in a decisive manner. Of some 700 members of the All-Russian Assembly, 370 were Socialist-Revolutionaries of the Right, 175 were Social-Democratic Bolsheviks, 53 were Ukrainian Socialists, 40 were Socialist-Revolutionaries of the Left, and the remaining 62 were either members of lesser national parties or of lesser political groups.³⁹ All nine of the Armenian representatives elected were members of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnak Party).

On January 18, 1918, the Assembly had opened its first session and elected a Right Socialist-Revolutionary, Viktor Chernov, as Chairman. Immediate disagreements ensued with the pro-Bolsheviks, and the Assembly had refused to ratify the Soviet government's actions. After a stormy first session, the Assembly had been declared dissolved by the Soviet government on January 19th. Thus had ended the first democratic assembly in Russian history.

The Transcaucasian Seym

The organization of a Transcaucasian Seym based on free elections, which first met on February 23, 1918, was an open rejection by all Transcaucasia of the Bol-

shevik Soviet government, caused in part by the hostility aroused when news reached Transcaucasia of the Bolshevik willingness to surrender Armenian and Georgian territories of the pre-War Russian Empire to Turkey in the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk. The Seym was dominated by the three national parties; the Georgians' and Russians' Social-Democratic Menshevik Party held 32 seats; the Azerbaidjanian Tatars' Musavat Party, 30 seats; the Armenians' Dashnak Party, 27 seats.⁴⁰ A scattering of seats was held by minor forces. Turkish Armenian refugees did not, in most of Transcaucasia, take part in the elections, for they were considered Turkish subjects and therefore barred from voting, although they now were a major group within the Transcaucasian populations, especially in Armenian and Georgian Transcaucasia.

While truce negotiations between Transcaucasia and Turkey were underway, Turkey had seized the opportunity offered by the break between the Bolshevik central government of Russia and the Transcaucasian regime to launch its attack against liberated Turkish Armenia. On March 1, 1918, the newly-installed Transcaucasian Seym appealed for peace. Turkish armies continued to advance, but in Trebizond in March peace negotiations took place.

The Georgians, who had failed to provide troops to hold the line of Gumush-Khaneh to Trebizond, as promised following the evacuation of the Russian troops, a failure which had exposed the entire northern part of the front to Turkish arms, did desire to prevent the Turks from entering the Transcaucasus,⁴¹ but their narrow view of national interests had led them to concentrate their forces solely on the Georgian

³⁹ Anatole G. Mazour, *Russia Past and Present*, p. 450.

⁴⁰ For materials on the internal developments of the Transcaucasian government and its negotiations with Turkey, see *Dokumenti i materialy po vneshnei politike Zakavkazia i Gruzii*, hereafter referred to as *Dokumenti i materialy*.

borders, while Armenian interests required a general defence on all fronts. The Georgian parties now took the lead in demanding peace through negotiation.

The Trebizond Conference

On March 26, 1918, the Sejm of the Transcaucasian Confederation made Chkhenkeli head of a large delegation with plenipotentiary powers to negotiate a peace. At the Sixth Session of the Preparatory Committee, on April 5th, it was announced that Transcaucasia was ready to cede to Turkey all the Olti District, the southern part of Ardahan District, the southwestern part of Kars Province, and the western part of the Kaghizvan District. At the same time, it was willing to negotiate a permanent solution of the Turkish Armenian question by sacrificing Armenian national and political rights through treating the problem as one of return of the surviving Armenians to their homes in Turkey under satisfactory guarantees of personal safety.⁴²

This, of course, amounted to a complete betrayal by Chkhenkeli of the promises made to the Armenians and of their interests. It was motivated solely by a desire on the part of the Georgians to keep Turkish armies away from the Georgian-inhabited districts. Even that, however, appeared too pro-Armenian to the Turks, who flatly refused to discuss the return of Armenians to Western Armenia or security for Caucasian Armenian districts.

On April 6th, the Turks curtly demanded that the terms of Brest-Litovsk must be accepted and that Transcaucasia must declare its independence of Russia before further negotiations took place. In response to that ultimatum, the Transcaucasian Confederation delegation was prepared to sur-

render even more land, but still refused to relinquish all claims to Kars Province and Batoum, though these had been granted to Turkey by the Bolsheviks in the Brest-Litovsk Treaty.

Despite a natural hesitance to open the door to further Turkish depredations against the Christian civil populations, both the Armenian Revolutionary Federation and the Georgian Social-Democratic Menshevik Party leaderships now united in fervent opposition to the Turkish demands. Georgian nationalism was bitterly offended by the Turkish demand for the cession of Batoum, the vital Black Sea outlet of Transcaucasia whose loss would render the Georgian area virtually dependent on the "good will" of Turkey, while the Armenians recognized in the Turkish demands a further threat to Eastern Armenia's population, now that Western Armenia was a desolate and deserted land. Only the Azerbaidjanian Musavat Party continued to favor peace with Turkey at any cost in Armenian and Georgian lands.

On April 14, Gegechkori, the President of the Confederation, ordered the Transcaucasian Delegation to return to Tiflis, and Chkhenkeli announced to Reouf, the head of the Turkish Delegation, that this was for consultation, not a termination of negotiations.

The Turco-Georgian War

On April 13, with the resistance against the Turkish army of more than 100,000 regulars crumbling, the Sejm met in emergency session in Tiflis. Gegechkori informed the deputies that the Turkish army had again begun hostilities in front of Batoum; he declared that acceptance of the terms of Brest-Litovsk would render the independence of Transcaucasia illusory, and that Transcaucasia would become a part of the Turkish Empire, if those terms should be accepted.

⁴¹ Dr. G. Pasdermajian, *Why Armenia Should Be Free*, pp. 35-36.

⁴² Republic, pp. 77-78.

Georgian speakers, especially Mensheviks, warned that Turkish imperialism and "internal betrayals" (referring solely to the danger from the Tatars) could end democracy and freedom for Transcaucasia. The Musavat Party representatives spoke out openly in favor of Turkey, stating that the Moslems of Transcaucasia would not war against their co-religionists, but would retain "neutrality."⁴³ With such division, it was impossible for Transcaucasia to do more than issue a general call to arms. The Georgians had found a common interest with the Armenians for the moment, for neither could afford a Turkish advance into Transcaucasia.

Scarcely had war measures been approved when news arrived on April 14 that Batoum had been taken without resistance. The Georgian troops had fled to Khodjabahar or were taken prisoners in large numbers. At the same time, it became obvious that the entire Moslem part of the population of Adjara and Akhaltsikhe along the pre-war Russo-Turkish border had risen in support of the Turks.

The Georgian people did not rise to the support of the Transcaucasian government with arms, and the morale of the Georgian troops was shattered, despite a minor victory near Cholok. The Turks continued to drive deep into Guria against little resistance, reaching Ozurgeti very soon after the start of the offensive.⁴⁴ With the collapse of the Georgian army, the Georgian leaders placed their country officially under German protection,⁴⁵ and the Turkish advance halted. The Armenians were again alone, now facing a greatly increased Turkish army and many thousands of marauding Caucasian Moslem irregulars.

⁴³ Republic, pp. 78-82 gives a detailed description of the events in the Sejm, including the text of the Call to Arms.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁴⁵ Pasdermadjian, p. 36.

The Armenian Pan-National Congress

The members of the Armenian National Council, after the fall of Erzeroum, had gone to the front to encourage the soldiers, whose morale was waning. At Alexandropol, Kars, and Sarikamish, they consulted with the representatives of the ordinary soldiers, as well as with the higher officers, and raised the morale noticeably. The loss of Sarikamish was expected, and the Armenian troops stiffened their resistance as the battle perimeter shortened toward Kars, where General Nazarbekian had a number of troops.

On April 20th and 21st, the entire Armenian people were represented at a Pan-National Congress, in which participated the Armenian National Council, the Committee of Safety, the Sejm deputies, the Trebizond Peace Conference Armenian representatives, representatives of the political parties, of Alexandropol, Erivan, and Kars cities, of the army, of various organizations, and outstanding public figures, including General Nazarbekian, General Silikian, Aram, Dro, and many others. This was the most representative Armenian assembly since the fall of 1917, and it spoke for the whole Armenian people.

With the grim news of Georgian manoeuvrings to desert the aims of the Confederation, the Congress was faced with serious problems. It was too late to salvage the situation of Georgia, for the Georgians had ended their war with Turkey and had agreed to declare the independence of the Transcaucasus and acceptance of Brest-Litovsk. The assembled Armenian spokesmen faced a choice between the isolated death of the remaining Armenian nation at the hands of the Turkish army and the surrounding Moslem populace or continuance of a tie with Armenia's neighbors, though the cost be the surrender of Turkish Armenia's claims and rights and one-third of Russian Armenia. As the lesser of

two evils, it was decided to take part in the new Transcaucasian Federated Democratic Republic, proposed by the Georgians. Some participants in the assembly desired Armenia to become allied with the Bolsheviks, for Lenin, they stated, had proclaimed the independence of Armenia, and the Bolsheviks were prepared to guarantee Armenia's existence.⁴⁶

Independent Transcaucasia

The twenty-second session of the Transcaucasian Seym met on April 22, 1918 in Tiflis; the atmosphere was thick with gloom on the part of the Armenian and Georgian deputies as the subject of independence was brought forward. The resolution for Transcaucasian Independence was defended by the initiating Georgian Mensheviks, but their position was exposed mercilessly by the Russian Semeonov and Social-Revolutionary Armenian deputy L. Toumanian. Only the Tatar Musavat Party and a part of the Georgian nationalist deputies felt any cheer, for these welcomed the proposed ties with Turkey and Germany. When discussion was ended, the Seym passed the following resolution: "The Transcaucasian Seym has decided to proclaim the Transcaucasus a democratic, federative republic." After hearing the report of the Trebizond negotiators, presented without discussion in accordance with previous consultation between the parties, the Seym accepted the resignation of the Gegechkori government and entrusted the formation of a new government to Chkhenkeli, whose partisan manoeuvrings had caused the abandonment of the pro-Allied Transcaucasian Confederation.⁴⁷

The Loss of Kars

The Turkish advance had been held up after Sarikamish by an increasing Arme-

nian resistance as more Armenian forces reached the front from reserve areas; at the same time, the forces withdrawing from Khnous, Moush, and Akhlat had halted temporarily on the Alashgerd Plain, and the military forces of Van were only just beginning a general withdrawal.⁴⁸ During the period of negotiation and the short-lived Turco-Georgian "war," more an advance against token resistance, Turkish army levies were diverted from the Palestine front to reinforce the Turkish forces on the Caucasian Front.⁴⁹

Delayed till April 22nd in reaching Kars by the rearguard skirmishes of the Armenians, the Turks attacked in strength on that date, expecting to sweep Armenian resistance before them. For four days, the Armenians repulsed the Turks in bloody battles, the outcome of which was determined by the artillery mounted in the Kars forts.⁵⁰

Chkhenkeli, acting without the knowledge or approval of the Transcaucasian high command, of the Seym, or even of his cabinet, meanwhile negotiated with the Turks to secure maximum advantage for the Georgians in the current situation; in return for a pledge of the return to Georgia of the important port and naval station of Batoum, he made secret commitments to deliver Kars to the Turks without the necessity for taking it by storm.⁵¹

When the Turks had actually reached the environs of the city, Chkhenkeli sent telegrams urging immediate cease-fire negotiations, as he claimed the government had decided to make peace with Turkey

⁴⁸ Sassouni, pp. 164-5.

⁴⁹ Gibbons, p. 136, quotes testimony of von Ludendorff and von Sanders on the withdrawing of troops from the Palestine Front.

⁵⁰ Pasdermadjian, p. 36.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 36-37, and Republic, pp. 88-92, give detailed accounts of Chkhenkeli's betrayal of the military forces at Kars. The loss of Kars, in the light of the facts recounted, must be ascribed to the Chkhenkeli Menshevik nationalists, rather than to failures of military leaders.

⁴⁶ Republic, pp. 83-5.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 84-7; *Dokumanti i materiali*, pp. 212-222.

and an armistice had been agreed to. Sent on his own initiative, the news of an armistice caused a sharp drop in the morale of the troops, for it seemed senseless to die if Turkey and Transcaucasia had, in fact, already agreed to peace. Thus, at a crucial moment, the Transcaucasian army at Kars, nearly all Armenian, with some Russian remnants from the former Imperial army, began to disintegrate as a fighting force.

While the Armenian troops had fought fiercely for four days, they were in doubt as to what purpose their fighting was serving. On the night of April 24th, General Nazarbekian received orders from the high command of Transcaucasia to accept the cease-fire conditions of the Turks and yield the forts. The Transcaucasian army withdrew from Kars, together with much of the civilian population, after burning the better buildings in the city. Despite the acceptance of all the Turkish conditions, it had to fight its way to the Akhourian River.

The Turkish forces entered Kars in the evening of April 25, and treated the city to a typically Turkish victory celebration, with all its attending barbarities.⁵² It is unknown how many persons were tortured, killed, or raped, or how much loot was seized, but, fortunately, the major part of the Armenian inhabitants had succeeded in escaping with the army. The commitments which Chkhenkeli believed the Turks had undertaken were not respected, and when the Armenian army crossed the Akhourian River in accordance with the orders of the high command, on April 28th, the political life of the new Transcaucasian Federated Republic was in turmoil.

The New Peace Conference at Batoum

The news of the occurrences at Kars had caused deep perturbation among the Geor-

gians and Armenians. The Armenian National Council called an emergency meeting. Leading persons contacted General Nazarbekian to urge a complete defense of Kars, but Nazarbekian was forced to answer that it was too late, and the turmoil grew.

The Seym and the newly-organized government had stormy sessions, with A. Aharonian, Kachaznoui, and Khatissian, the Dashnak ministers, furiously protesting Chkhenkeli's illegal methods. The Dashnak ministers resigned, and the Dashnaktzoutoun publicly branded Chkhenkeli a traitor and demanded his resignation. The Georgian Social Democrats through Jordania and Tseretelli expressed their regrets over the unfortunate happenings and blamed Chkhenkeli, but announced that they would withdraw Chkhenkeli's candidacy only if an Armenian, such as Kachaznoui, would become Premier; in effect, that meant the end of the Transcaucasian Republic under the present circumstances. Still hoping to retain at least the Georgians as non-hostile neighbors, the leaders of the Dashnaktzoutoun permitted themselves to accept Chkhenkeli as the head of government, rather than see the Transcaucasian Republic die.

A new peace mission was organized, with the following members: A. Chkhenkeli, president; N. Nikolatse; A. Khatissian; H. Kachaznoui; M. Kachinsky; Khan-Khoysky; together with a number of assistants. On May 6th, they arrived in Batoum, and on May 11 began the peace conference. On the Turkish side were Khalil, Vehib Pasha, Nousret Bey, Orkhan Bey, and others, while General von Lossow, Count Schulenburg, and O. von Wesendonck represented Germany. At the very start, the question of the representation of the Mountain Republic of the Caucasus arose, and it was finally agreed that Haidar Beg Bammad be admitted as the repre-

⁵² cf. Republic, pp. 90-93, Sassouni, p. 165, and Pasdermadjian, pp. 36-37, for the military events of the Kars defense and withdrawal.

sentative of the Mountaineers.

At the beginning of the actual negotiations, Chkhenkeli set forth the proposition that the negotiations be based on the Bolshevik-German-Turkish Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, "which was acceptable," but Khalil immediately rejected that position, for, he contended, since the end of the Trebizond Conference had occurred a war between Turkey and Transcaucasia, blood had been shed, and, therefore, Turkey had the right to make new demands, and, in order that "negotiations not be delayed", he gave to Chkhenkeli an already prepared "treaty of peace and friendship between Turkey and the Transcaucasian Republic," which, in effect, was an ultimatum.

Of the terms of that proposed treaty, embodied in twelve articles and three appendices, it can only be said that it meant the end of any political progress and freedom in the Transcaucasus. Georgia and Armenia, especially the latter, were to be particularly weakened, Georgia losing the entire Batoum coastal area and Akhaltsikhe, while Armenia was to be reduced to an insignificant corner of mountainous land incapable of either agricultural or commercial life. The Alexandropol-Kars and Alexandropol-Djoulfra railroads, on which Armenian economy depended, were to be in Turkish hands, as also Akhalkalak, Alexandropol, the major parts of Shirak and Etchmiadzin Districts, and Sourmalou.

Thus, Turkey would have ended the ability of the Transcaucasian states to retain any but a shadow autonomy, while securing a land bridge through Kars-Sourmalou - Nakhitchevan - Zangezur - Gharabagh to Persian and Russian Azerbaijan and Baku, and, in time, to the Trans-Caspian lands. The Pan-Turanian dream was to be realized, if the Turks had their way.

The Turkish demands astounded not only the Armenians and the Georgian represen-

tatives, but also the Germans, who immediately communicated with Berlin on May 12th, warning that Turkey had gone far beyond the terms of Brest-Litovsk, had demanded purely Armenian territories, planned to exterminate the Armenians in Transcaucasia, and, despite von Lossow's protest, claiming his permission, had ordered their troops to Alexandropol to occupy the Alexandropol-Djoulfra rail line.⁵³

A New Turkish Offensive

While a mixed military committee argued this latter demand, against the stubborn refusal of Generals Odishelitze and Ghorghanian (Korganoff) to agree to such a proposal, which could only be accepted by a higher authority and permitted only by terms in a peace treaty, the Turks presented an ultimatum to the Armenian forces to vacate Alexandropol and move 25 kilometers eastward, turning over the city by seven o'clock in the morning of May 15th. Without waiting for an answer, at two in the morning of May 15th, the Turkish Army opened a general attack, and demanded evacuation of the city by 6 A.M.

The Armenian army caught by surprise retreated rapidly, and Alexandropol fell to the Turks. On the instructions of General Nazarbekian, the Armenian army split into two columns, one retreating toward Geok-Yoghoush - Bekeand - Avdibek - Pamb villages, the other moving toward Sardarabad to strengthen the Erivan forces. Western Armenian General Antranig, who since May first had been in the Akhalkalak area

⁵³ Republic, pp. 93-96, gives a careful account of the formation and activity of the new peace mission, as well as the occurrences at the Batoum Peace Conference. See also, G. Korganoff, *La Participation des Armeniens a la guerre mondiale sur le front du Caucase* 1914-1918, pp. 157-158; Johannes Lepsius, *Deutschland und Armenien*, 1914-1918, pp. 384-392; Allen and Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields*, pp. 467-471, *Dokumenti i materiali*, pp. 268-316; Kazemzadeh, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia* (1917-1921), pp. 109-117.

with his troops, was ordered to protect the Northern districts, but he retired to Djalal-Oghli, refusing to obey orders sent him for the Transcaucasian high command or the Armenian National Council in Tiflis.

By May 22nd the Turkish Army had reached Hamamlou station, which opened the way to Erivan. Furious efforts were made by the Armenians to strengthen the front; Dro was sent to Bash Abaran and General Nazarbekian appealed to the patriotism of the Armenian troops to protect the remnant of the nation. The retreat of the Armenian forces halted. On May 24th a series of Armenian counterattacks began on the Erivan front, while a bitter battle was raging at Gharakilisse in which the Armenians were successful. The badly defeated Turks withdrew toward Hamamlou. Armenian successes against the greatly superior Turkish forces continued during the next few days, as the Turks received great losses and witnessed the shattering of their carefully laid plans.

On May 25th and 26th occurred new bloody encounters in which the Turkish retreat was accelerated. Receiving reinforcements and new artillery on May 27th, The Turks attempted to counterattack. On May 28th, the Armenian forces smashed the right wing and penetrated the center of the Turkish lines. The great victory of Gharakilissa created unprecedented enthusiasm. At the same time, great battles were raging at Bash Abaran and Sardarabad, in which the Armenian forces were similarly successful.⁵⁴

Internal Difficulties

While the Armenian nation was fighting for its life at Bash Abaran, Gharakilissa, and Sardarabad, difficulties faced Armenia within. The Turkish Armenian General

Antranig had refused to obey orders from General Nazarbekian, and had exposed Northern Armenia to possible Turkish attack by withdrawing his forces, first to Djalal Oghli, then to Dilijan, which he reached on May 30th.

At the same time, while the Armenians had been fighting the invading Turks, the Moslems of various sections of Caucasian Armenia had risen to cut communications and massacre and loot Armenian villages. On May 22nd, the Transcaucasian government decided to send mixed commissions of Dashnak and Musavat members to particular trouble spots. It was, unfortunately, impossible to restrain the fury of the Armenians betrayed at a critical moment by their neighbors. Against the massacres and robbery of the Tatars arose a storm of revenge, and a number of Moslem villages suffered heavily in turn.⁵⁵

The End of Transcaucasia As a Republic

While the Armenians were forging notable victories against the Turks during May, the negotiations at Batoum had proved fruitless for the Turks. On May 26th the Turkish delegation presented an ultimatum to force its harsh terms on Transcaucasia before the outcome of the battle if possible. The same day a Georgian representative at the Seym proposed the dissolution of the Republic. Georgia had secured by private negotiation an agreement with Germany whereby she became a German protectorate.⁵⁶ The Georgian

⁵⁵ cf. Republic, pp. 97-116, for a clear discussion of the tangled hostilities and unneighborly relations between the Caucasian Moslems and the Armenians, not only in Russian Armenia, but throughout the entire Caucasus. That Turkish Pan-Turanism, Pan-Islamic propagandists and agents were behind the civil troubles is recognized.

⁵⁴ For accounts of military activities, see Congress, pp. 4 and 5; Republic, pp. 96-7 and 117-123; Pasdermajian, p. 37; Gibbons, p. 136; Allen and Muratoff, pp. 471-476.

⁵⁶ Z. Avalov, *Nezavisimost Gruzii v mezhdunarodnoi politike*, pp. 65-67. "Georgia realized that she must act independently or become the victim of Turkish ambition which sought to

National Council declared the independence of Georgia, with Azerbaijan following that action the following day. On May 28th, the Armenian National Council, as a natural outgrowth of the preceding events, likewise declared the independence of the Armenian areas of Transcaucasia.⁵⁷

Turkish troops still threatened the land, and were in occupation of Kars District and the Alexandropol area, but the wave of enthusiasm which had arisen from the defeats inflicted on the Turkish forces raised the Armenian national morale to an unprecedentedly high point; the Armenians were now determined that their future should be determined by the Armenians alone. Though independence had been born of great travail, it was the natural culmination of the Armenian revolutionary movement.

On May 30, 1918, in Batoum the peace negotiators of Turkey and of the now independent Transcaucasian republics of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaidjan reassembled. The Armenian delegates were not formally the representatives of a republic in fact, for Alexander Khatissian, Mikael Papadjanian, and Hovhanness Kachaznoui had been selected by the Armenian National Council in Tiflis on its own authority on May 28th.

Meetings between the various responsible Armenian bodies were yet to take place on May 29th, and no formal proclamation in the name of the Armenian people was issued by any body until May 30. The May 30, 1918, Proclamation of the Armenian National Council did not, even then, use

the term independence,⁵⁸ for the Armenians felt that Armenia's unitary and *de jure* independence could only take place at the end of the war, when the promises made extensively by all the Allied nations would become a reality. However, the consultative meetings of May 29th had agreed to the establishment of Erivan as the capital of Armenia.

The acceptance on May 28th of the Turkish conditions for further negotiation at Batoum was in fact a declaration of Armenian independence. The Batoum Turkish emissaries headed by Khalil Pasha pursuing a long-range plan of "divide and rule", insisted on "national independence" of the Transcaucasian peoples as the only basis for further negotiations.⁵⁹

The Batoum Treaty

When the Armenian delegates began to discuss terms with the Turks, on May 30, the situation of the Turkish army was not as favorable as it had been before the break-up of the Transcaucasian Federative Republic, for the Armenians had succeeded in smashing the three-pronged Turkish offensive with heavy losses to the Turks, and only one major military threat continued, that around Alexandropol, where Turkish forces were preparing for a new offensive.

With Turkish reinforcement, however, the entire front could become highly dangerous again, for Armenia had less than twenty thousand troops ready for combat, a number which, no matter how fiercely the Armenian army fought, could be eventually overwhelmed, exposing the remaining Armenian people to extermination. Un-

create a Turkish Empire that included all the Islamic tribes of Caucasia and Persia, and extend its influence from the Black to the Caspian Seas. . . pp. 12-13; Vasili D. Dumbadze, *The Caucasian Republics*; New York, 1925. Dumbadze wrote as a member of the "Georgian Legation" in Paris.

⁵⁷ Congress, p. 5.

⁵⁸ cf., Appendix of Documents, this article.

⁵⁹ Alexander Khatissian, in *The Origin and Development of the Armenian Republic*, discusses the attitudes of the Turkish leaders toward the independence of Armenia lucidly, reporting statements they made to him. James G. Mandalian has analyzed the charge that Armenian independence was a "gift" of the Turks in his "Vahan Kurkjian as 'Historian,'" *Armenian Review*, No. 46 (July, 1959), pp. 45-53.

der such circumstances, at the very time that the order had been issued by General Silikian to counterattack and drive the Turks from the Alexandropol area,⁶⁰ the delegations at Batoum affixed their signatures to a preliminary peace treaty, on June 4th.⁶¹

In that treaty, binding until the conclusion of a final peace conference to be held in Constantinople later in June of 1918, the Armenians were secured against annihilation at the hands of the Turkish army, but at a heavy cost.⁶² The Peace and Friendship Treaty of Batoum was no act of charity, for, though Turkey thus became the first country to recognize the independence of Armenia, the latter republic was limited to a mere 12,000 square miles.⁶³ with nearly one million inhabitants, including the Western Armenian and other refugees. And, a scant seven kilometers from the capital city Erivan, Turkish artillery watched over the new state! Armenia, after four years of heroic fighting on the side of the Allies, was forced by her heavy losses and the threat of annihilation to make peace with the Central Powers.

On the 32,000 square kilometers granted to the Armenians were to be found only one-third of the Armenian population of the Transcaucasus;⁶⁴ of Russian Armenia's territory of slightly more than 25,000 square miles, less than half had been left to the Armenians, the rest being allotted to Turkey, German-protected Georgia, and Turkish-protected Azerbaidjan. Armenia's railroads were to be under Turkish control. The Turkish Armenian question remained unsettled.

⁶⁰ Congress, p. 5.

⁶¹ Oddly, Gibbons, p. 137 and Pasdermadjian, p. 37, give the date as June 14, 1918, while Sassouni, p. 165, gives June 5, 1918. Republic, p. 132 and Congress, p. 5, agree on June 4, 1918.

⁶² cf. Republic, pp. 132-4; cf. Appendix of Documents, this article.

⁶³ Vratzian (Republic), in a rare slip, says square kilometers!

⁶⁴ Pasdermadjian, p. 38.

The Creation of a Cabinet

The Armenian National Council, now acting as the *de facto* government of Caucasian Armenia while awaiting the establishment of a "free, united, and independent Armenia" at the conclusion of the war, proceeded to create a Cabinet to provide actual administration. After the signing of the Batoum Preliminary Treaty of Peace and Friendship, the Armenian National Council moved from relatively comfortable and secure Tiflis (now the capital of Independent Georgia) to backward, provincial, poverty-stricken Erivan, constantly threatened by the Turkish forces stationed within easy artillery distance. Hovhanness Kachaznoui was named the first Premier of the Araratian Armenian Republic.⁶⁵

The Ratification Congress of Constantinople

On June 19, 1918, the Ratification Congress of Constantinople brought together the empowered representatives of Georgia, Azerbaidjan, Araratian Armenia, Ottoman Turkey, Germany, and Austria. Armenia's representatives, who, significantly, did not then represent the Turkish Armenians who still maintained an administration and a military force within the Van area, were headed by Alexander Khatissian, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Avetis Aharonian, the President of the Armenian National Council. While a preliminary set of conditions had been accepted at the Batoum armistice meeting, the final wording of the actual treaty was agreed on in the Congress of Constantinople.

The unjust terms imposed on Armenia by the Central Powers, of course, were no more binding after the defeat of the Central Powers than was the harsh Roumanian Peace Treaty of a few months earlier. The

⁶⁵ The Independent Republic of Armenia was variously referred to also as the Republic of Erivan, the Republic of Ararat, or Araratian Armenia.

Armenians of Transcaucasian districts arbitrarily assigned to Georgia and Azerbaijan refused to accept severance from the Armenian state, and they continued to fight against incorporation in any but an Armenian state.

The Downfall of the Van Armenian State

At the same time, the Armenian administration in Van Vilayet (the Ottoman Province of Van) had continued to govern much of that area of Turkish Armenia, fighting off all attempts by the Kurds and Turks to dislodge the Armenian forces. Cut off from Caucasian Armenia by the Turkish military advances of May, 1918, the Armenian military formations in Van continued to hold their positions for two

months more in the face of overwhelming odds, then withdrew toward the city of Urmia in Persian Armenia in July. Joined by the Assyrian Christians and the Armenians of Persian Armenia, they fought off the attacks of large forces of Turkish and Kurdish regulars and irregulars, finally breaking through the Turkish lines in September to reach the British forces at Hamadan in Persia.⁶⁶ Thus ended the Armenian administration of a part of Turkish Armenia, while a remnant of Russian Armenia, in the face of seemingly insuperable difficulties, established an Armenian Independent Republic in the Araratian Plain, centered around Erivan.

(To be continued)

⁶⁶ Pasdermadjian, p. 38.

● THE ANGUISH OF THE DYING:

A HANDFUL OF EARTH

PROFESSOR DONABED LULEJIAN

Give us, Lord, a handful of earth to hide these slaughtered bodies, these bleached bones, at least a handful of earth to bury these unclaimed dead.

We bury the dead to keep their memory sacred. The clods are clean to us. We place our loved one into its bosom and we fancy he shall always lie there. We do not like to see loathsome sights, the worm-eaten bodies of our loved ones, their eyes, their beautiful eyes the hive of maggots. We do not like to see their cheeks, their kissable cheeks, defiled by the mildew and their pomegranated lips the meat of worms. We do not like to see the disintegration, the dissolution and the decay of the bodies

of our loved ones. Our heart rests there, embalmed in the earth, to rise again at the glorious dawn of the resurrection. Let us cover the vision of death with a handful of earth, let us bury our dead with a handful of earth.

And yet, there they are, on the mountains and the valleys, strewn around and forsaken. The maggots crawl over them and the worms frolic among them. Their eyes are sunk deep in their sockets, their faces are hideous, there is the stench of the slaughter house about them. It is a repulsive sight and we flee from them. We shun those whom we once loved, for whose love we would give our life blood. O Lord,

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Prof. Donabed Lulejian, the author of this moving invocation to the memory of the ravished bodies of one million Armenian martyrs who fell victim to Turkish barbarism during the 1915 deportations, was born in 1875 in the City of Harpoot, Turkish Armenia. A graduate of Euphrates College in 1897, he joined the faculty of his Alma Mater and served as instructor in the American missionary college until 1909. That year he came to the United States and spent one year each at Cornell and Yale universities as a graduate student, receiving his M.S. degree in 1911. Returning to his birthplace in Turkish Armenia, he resumed his post at his Alma Mater until the Armenian deportations of 1915 when he was made a fugitive. He assisted the defenders of Dersim in their resistance stand against the Turks in 1916 and when the Russian armies occupied Erzinka he devoted his energies to the task of rehabilitating the Armenian returnees from the exile. Once again exiled by the Russian military, he moved to Karin (Erzeroum) where he continued his work of rehabilitation. At this time he sent an extensive report of the Turkish atrocities to the U. S. State Department. He continued to serve his people, fighting against the famine and the epidemic in Tiflis, and later, in Erzeroum where, infected by the typhus which he was fighting, he closed his eyes forever on March 22, 1917.

Although he did not fall by the cruel sword, he was just as much of a victim of Turkish brutality the effects of which he felt on his drained and emaciated body until he succumbed under the pressure. He was mourned by the Armenians as one of the noblest and most valiant sons of Armenia.

"A Handful of Earth," written with blood and tears during the years of his persecution, is taken from a volume called "Hasegagh" (Gleanings), an anthology of redeemed fragments from the unpublished works of the author, recently published in Armenian by his brother Levon Lulejian, editor of *Mushag*, Fresno, California, and his nephew Mr. Sarkis Terzian of Philadelphia.

give us at least a handful of earth to hide this pitiful sight.

There lie our little children, our saplings whose milk-white bodies are stripped and torn. There is a lead hole in their chest, and one in their head. Give us at least a handful of earth to cover this Armenian child, this Armenian flower.

There lie our beautiful young brides, hideously degraded and defiled. Give us a handful of earth to cover their tragic shame.

There lie our Armenian lads, the sons of the nation, their chests torn open, their heads shattered, strewn there with outstretched arms under the sun. Give us a handful of earth to hide this pitieous sight.

And there lie our braves and our emaciated oldsters, piled one upon another; the valley is filled with their bodies, who knows, what battle axe clove their skulls and what sword pierced their chests, disfigured and charred under the burning sun? A handful of earth to cover this frightful sight.

A handful of earth, O God, sprinkle a handful of earth on them, so that thine eyes shall not see through the stars this holocaust of thy impotent children, this pitiful offering on the altar of thy anger. Sprinkle a handful of earth on them so

that thine angels shall not be frightened at sight of the demons' dance, a handful of earth so that the earth shall not rock to its foundations at sight of this great beastly exhibition.

Cast a handful of earth over the cruel heart which already is earth, colder than the earth, more senseless and more callous than the earth. Strew a handful of earth at least on my heart, O Lord, which writhes in the flames of great pangs, which is rent by the greatest of griefs. A handful of earth to soften my pain and to heal my wounds.

A handful of earth and let there be an end to the frightful sight, the last page of Armenia's immolation. Let the Armenian become the fossilized shame of civilization which was so cruel and merciless to the weak, and a curse to the barbarian foe who made him homeless.

Let this handful of earth become a fossil, and let those bleached bones be the inscription of Armenian suffering to the man of tomorrow, to murmur eternally the magnitude of Armenia's grief.

Give us, O Lord, the handful of earth we beseech thee, both to cover the misery, and perchance to rectify the great wrong.

Oulou Poughar, Dersim.

1915

IRANIAN AND ARMENIAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BEGINNINGS OF GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE

ARTHUR UPHAM POPE

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When Viollet-le-Duc published his *Encyclopedie* in 1866, he was sure that the origins of French Gothic architecture were to be found in France itself; that the slow, continuous development of primitive elements, traditional or regionally invented adequately explained the completed style. When, however, a few years later the Marquis de Vogüé published his great work, *Syrie Centrale*, Viollet-le-Duc was deeply impressed, and it was he who urged Marcel Dieulafoy, a railroad engineer of wide cultural interests and exceptional ability, to search the Near East for the origins of Gothic architecture.

¹ This article summarizes in a somewhat general fashion the thesis of lectures which the writer gave in the French universities in 1935 as Harvard Lecturer on the James Hazen Hyde Foundation. In its present condensed form it is essentially an hypothesis. A final appraisal of Iranian contributions to Gothic architecture would require a much fuller statement, more extended arguments and the citation of more monuments and more structural detail, and plan types which the circumstances of the moment quite forbid. The statement in its present form was given before a meeting of the Byzantine and Slavic Congress in the Iranian Institute, M. Gregoire presiding, on May 18. The writer has presumed on the good will of M. Baltrusaitis and M. Vallery-Radot to borrow several illustrations from their books. It is reprinted from Vol. I, 1946, No. 2, of the former "Armenian Quarterly."

"Go beyond Syria to Persia, and perhaps you will find those beginnings," he counselled.

Dieulafoy accepted the advice and undertook a memorable journey throughout Persia, in which he made some notable discoveries. In his well-known publication of these results he interpreted some of the newly found monuments with acumen and sound imagination, despite his lack of sufficient background, and announced the thesis that the origins of Gothic architecture were Persian.² This idea created considerable excitement, and though it was, for the time being, accepted by a number of architects, provoked in other quarters violent opposition and even scorn. His arguments were vulnerable, for the Persian monuments which he thought significant were separated from their presumed effects in France by great distances and a still more serious gap in time. The elements which he noted were insufficient to estab-

² Marcel Dieulafoy, "L'Art Antique de la Perse," Paris, 1884. V, p. 145; idem, *Espagne et Portugal*, Paris, 1921; Francois Benoit, *L'Architecture, L'Orient Medieval et Moderne*, Paris, 1912, p. 69; Auguste Choisy, *L'Histoire de L'Architecture*, Vol. I, 1899. *passim*

lish his deductions, and no definite connections between the two styles were established. As a consequence, thoughtful historians, while admitting the probability of Near Eastern contributions to Romanesque architecture, almost unanimously rejected Dieulafoy's conception as unprovable and superfluous.

Dieulafoy could not sustain his contention because the more vital elements in Early Islamic Iranian architecture are to be found in occupied mosques, of which he managed to see only one or two, since they were all closed to infidels. Indeed, until recently attempts to enter have been few and at extreme risk. As late as February, 1925, the American Vice-Consul was murdered by a mob at Teheran merely for photographing a small street-fountain. Beginning in the early thirties some of the Isfahan mosques were opened one by one to Europeans, and other mosques also were gradually made available, though some are still inaccessible. From 1925 on the writer penetrated all the principal mosques of Iran, examined them with more or less leisure, and took several thousand photographs.³ The results have warranted a re-examination of Dieulafoy's theory, for his account can now be supplemented by new facts and observations.

Possible Iranian contributions to Gothic architecture cannot be evaluated without defining the essentials of the Gothic style, and on these there is no complete agreement. The old notion that its essential feature was the pointed arch is no longer acceptable. Five other elements are equally or more important, and it is the combination of these factors that constitutes true Gothic architecture. These are:

1. The transverse vault—a vault running at right angles to the main vault, which relieves the side wall from lateral pressure

and thus permits a wider vault and also a thinner wall which can be safely opened up for lighting.

2. The ribbed ogival vault—a vault in which a framework carries the load, leaving the intermediate panels of wall or vault relatively inert.

3. The pointed arch.

4. Compound piers, angle columns and column clusters.

5. The flying buttress—a daring contrivance which picks up the lateral thrust of the vault on the exterior, transmitting it across an open space.

6. In terms of style, a demand for emphatic verticality.

All these elements are to be found in Persia in examples which represent long established styles and techniques.

Gothic architecture is not a natural or inevitable development out of Romanesque building, as some scholars have argued, but represents, structurally, a series of striking innovations, of which the major elements are not to be found in the building techniques or styles of either France or Byzantium, as has been repeatedly asserted. Whether they are the product of spontaneous invention, as has been urged, not without vehemence, is a question which can be decided only by a detailed analysis of all the relevant facts, appraised in the light of historical principles and probabilities.

We can best understand why the French builders were driven to search for new methods of construction if we recall their problems. Because of the increasing wealth and population of the communes, the facilities of the older Romanesque churches with their restricted capacities, their narrow and dark naves, were dangerously insufficient. On important occasions they were jammed with excited crowds; hysteria and panic ensued, "for the narrowness of the place forced the women to run

³ Now the property of the Iranian Institute and School of Asiatic Studies, New York.

towards the altar upon the heads of men as if they were a pavement with much anguish and noisy confusion," Abbot Suger wrote,⁴ distressed at the unseemly violence of the communicants. More ample space was an obvious and immediate necessity.

Another imperative demand on the builders was for non-inflammable roofs. There was throughout the 11th and 12th centuries a ghastly series of holocausts which resulted principally from thunderstorms setting fire to timbered roofs.⁵ Again and again panic-stricken congregations choked the doorways, and victims by the hundreds were consumed as in a fiery furnace. Scores of these disasters notified the Church that this problem had to be solved.

Various solutions were attempted. One of the most resolute and interesting was a type taken over from Byzantium, with a series of domes (*coupoles en file*). There are nearly sixty of these churches still extant in Aquitaine, built from 1100 to 1160 (St. Font, St. Etienne in Périgueux, Cahors, Souillac; and in Charente, the Cathedral of Angoulême).⁶ These churches are simple and majestic, the interiors spacious, the structure secure; but they were not wholly satisfactory. They required huge masses of masonry which were very costly. The simplicity of the interiors becomes monotonous and bleak, insufficient to the need for verticality and elaboration inherent in the trend of taste of the time; the exteriors lack unified character, the domes competing with one another. Nor was the style sympathetic to the spirit of the period. It was imported, and had been

determined in Byzantium not only by structural tradition, but also by psychological motivations involving alien aesthetic and religious needs. It was necessary to look farther.

In addition to greater space and security, more light also was very desirable. If stone was substituted for the inflammable woodwork, the greatly increased lateral pressure required thicker walls which could be pierced safely only with rather low, narrow windows. An effort to strengthen the Romanesque type of vault with semi-circular ribs like barrel staves⁷ resulted in increasing the lateral thrust, and even when this was discharged onto piers, the roof between the ribs was not supported, so that thicker walls were necessary or, for economy, heavier contreforts to contain the thrusts. These contreforts cast shadows on the relatively small windows, so that in the winter, or on dark days, or early morning or evening the cathedral was indeed dim.

A strong, non-inflammable roof which could be built so as to widen the nave, a vaulting system light and strong which would also provide height, exciting richness and the dramatic display of complicated energies, a type of buttress which would permit better illumination, these were the pressing requirements which the builders earnestly strove to meet. The solutions were ready to hand in the Orient.

The beginnings of Gothic architecture can, with certain qualifications, be found in Sasanian structures, as Dieulafoy insisted sixty years ago. Here we find fully developed in monumental buildings the transverse vault, and with it the utilization of adjoining counterpoising vaults and arches which pick up and distribute the expanding thrusts of dome or nave. But more

⁴ E. Panofsky, Abbot Suger, Princeton Univ. Press, 1946, p. 43. See also p. 87.

⁵ Nearly one hundred destructive fires have been recorded. Many thousands were burned or trampled to death. Several churches were afflicted thus more than once.

⁶ For a brilliant discussion, see de Lasteyrie "L'Architecture Religieuse en France . . . Romane," pp. 788-800; also Valléry's admirable *Eglises Romanes*, Paris, pp. 116-142.

⁷ e.g. Cathedral at Digne, Eglise de Benevent-l'Abbaye (Creuse), examples in Poitou, Limousin, Bourgogne, cf. de Lasteyrie, *L'Architecture Religieuse en France . . . Romane*, pp. 238-249.

than this, the Sasanian architects who had, in Sasanian manner, been accustomed to clumsy and rather rapid building with inferior materials which, for political and imperial reasons, had to be constantly employed to the maximum for the most imposing effect, apparently began to be troubled by the massiveness of their walls. Perhaps the Chancellor of the Exchequer may also have protested against the cost of these mountains of mortar-set rubble. In the ruined palace of Sarvistan, which is datable at the beginning of the 5th century A.D., for the first time among extant monuments we find all effort to analyze a structure, to find other means of achieving stability than reliance on sheer weight. Here the homogeneity of the building is broken up, structural elements differentiated, new functions assigned. The weight carried by a wall could be relieved by an arch, and the thickness of the wall could thus be diminished. Furthermore, the apparent thickness of the arch was reduced if the arches could be concentrated on a small pier instead of being carried full side to the ground. By this means the main and most visible section of room was enlarged by several feet in each direction, a substantial improvement. This was made possible by diminishing the structural function of the wall and transferring it to other units such as piers and arches. This may not be Gothic architecture, but it is the Gothic idea in embryo.

1. The Transverse Vault

It was the transverse vault which solved the problem of the much needed wide stone roof. In this scheme the long tunnel vault is broken up by a series of arches carrying the whole weight of the vault, and these are connected by cross vaults. As the weight of the roof is thus concentrated on the arches and their piers, the lateral thrust on the walls is reduced to a minimum, and they can therefore be greatly lightened

and also safely pierced for good-sized windows high up.

The lateral pressure of the long tunnel vault has now been transformed into longitudinal pressures, for the little cross vaults which unite the great arches one to the other tend to push them over in either direction lengthwise of the building. In the cathedral these pressures are contained at one end by the portal with heavy flanking towers, and at the opposite end by the semi-circular apse or a series of radial chapels. In Persia, where the cross vault was invented, these lengthwise pressures are contained either by thick walls at both ends (Khan Ortma), or by an entrance portal flanked by minarets, as in the mosques, or by abutment on another structure, or by external flying buttresses, as at Yazd.

The oldest extant example of the transverse vault is in the ruined Ivan-i-Karka in Southwest Persia, built towards the end of the fourth century A. D. Here the long vault is broken up by powerful transverse arches which take up virtually the whole lateral thrust. The wall is hardly more than a curtain wall and is pierced high up for windows, as in the later cathedrals. Transverse vaults of a kind were used in the Taq-i-Qisra, though these were primarily tunnel vaults set at right angles to the main vault to take up some of the lateral pressure.

Tradition, supported by documents, affirms that Harun ar-Rashid built a section of the present Masjid-i-Jami of Kazvin. Adjoining the sanctuary, which is Seljuq work, 1104-1111 A.D., is a primitive vaulted oratory which seems likely to have been part of the original structure built by the great Baghdad caliph in the eighth century. Here also is a characteristic transverse vault. The Masjid-i-Jami in Shiraz (894 A.M.) was roofed with transverse

vaults of same character.⁸ The cross-vaults of the Khan Ortma in Baghdad (early 14th century) merely continue this traditional technique, which is even more perfectly exemplified in the lovely little oratory of the Masjid-i-Jami of Yazd, for which a date of 1385 – the date of the mihrab in the adjacent sanctuary – seems certain.

If the Yazd oratory were the only Persian example which we had of the cross vault, it would be thought imprudent to relate it to European transverse vaults; but in view of the long history of this construction, we must assume the existence of many examples which were destroyed in the Mongol holocaust, or by earthquake, or other natural or human destructive agencies. This method of transverse vaulting has continued in Persia down to the present.

Here is one of the essentials of Gothic architecture which had already had a long life in Iran many centuries before its appearance in Europe. The earliest extant example of its use in Europe is the Church of St. Philibert in Tournus in Burgandy (1009-1019).

2. The Ribbed Ogival Vault

The ribbed ogival vault was destined, in conjunction with the transverse vault, to provide a final and satisfactory solution for the Gothic problem of security, space and light. Even though the weight of the roof was reduced by the transverse vault, it was still exceedingly heavy and created various problems. To lighten the roof and more perfectly organize and distribute the powerful forces engaged, a new type of construction was required.

The idea of independent framework which shall do most of the mechanical work, dividing the vault into compartments which exercise little structural function is not at all obvious, though its advantages

are immense, once achieved. In European architecture there were neither models nor traditions which could of themselves give birth to such a scheme; but in Iran the ribbed vault was indigenous, and it appears there before it appears in the West.

Are these Iranian vaults really ribbed in the architectural sense, and were they the source of the idea? The crucial examples are the vaults on the east side of the sanctuary of the Masjid-Jami of Isfahan.⁹ The dome, built by Nizam-ul-Mulk, vizier to Malek Shah, as the inscription declares, must have been constructed between 1080 and 1085 (possibly a little earlier). The piers are much earlier, as is shown by their form and dimensions as well as by the stucco ornament which still adheres to the impost blocks.¹⁰ The piers in what may fairly be called the 'library vaults' are contemporary with the older part of the sanctuary, and while the vaults which now crown them could be as late as the dome (Seljuq), they might also be much earlier. These vaults – whatever their date – are bold, skillful, confident constructions and, in view of the conservatism of Persian builders, the gradualness with which they developed their forms and the tenacity with which they hold to them, it seems certain that they are but late examples of a well established type.

There has been a general tendency to deny that the 'ribs' or 'armatures,' as they are sometimes called (a question-begging word), are genuinely structural.¹¹ The ribs in Vault 60 are salient by two feet at the deepest point; they penetrate the vault and they have stood firm, while several of the compartments have collapsed and are now filled in with rather haphazard repairs.

Although these ribs occasionally are indicated only by narrow lines one or two

⁹ First noted by the writer, photographed and studied in April-May, 1929.

¹⁰ See "Survey of Persian Art," Vol. II, p. 955 and Bull. Iranian Inst., Oct. '46.

⁸ See Schroeder, in "Survey of Persian Art," Vol. II, pp. 942-3.

bricks wide so that they hardly look structural, an examination of some of the deteriorating vaults shows that there are ribs almost wholly concealed which are six bricks wide. In most of the compartments the brick end-plugs have been shaken loose by the not infrequent earthquakes of Isfahan, and the panel has all but collapsed, showing that it was exercising little or no constructive function, while the ribs are almost intact and firm. Such ribs as those in the chapel of the Mausoleum of Ujjaitu would, if the structure were intact, probably be dismissed as merely decorative. As a matter of fact, the lines of the ribs which are now visible are just the forward edge of a single line of plaster-coated bricks, but these are only the marking edge of thick ribs penetrating the vault, which on the upper side are salient by more than eighteen inches.

It is worthy of note that Persian builders use such ribs today in constructing domical vaults. They make the ribs first, and quite independently put in the compartments afterwards. These little ribbed domes are found all over Persia and obviously continue forms and habits established centuries ago.

The ribs in the half-dome of the Caravanserai at Tabas have been stripped of their plaster coating and show their powerful structural function. A similar construction was revealed in the Masjid-i-Jami of Kazvin when the nineteenth century dome at the portal was denuded. The robust intersecting ribs there were obviously meant to be the substantial framework of the whole structure. The interstitial panels are all slightly concave. The builders could not have been working for

decorative effect in these cases for the pattern could have been provided very inexpensively with about five per cent. of the construction which has gone into the making of these ribs.

Certainly the stout ribs of the two ivan vaults of the Masjid-i-Jami of Isfahan could have had no decorative intent, for they are visible only from the roof. Here the structural function is declared without the least ambiguity. The compartments of the north west ivan are themselves small vaults, convex, resting securely on the ribs which carry the whole structure. The main arch is heavily weighted on the haunches in order to pin it more firmly to the ground. The lateral pressure of the vault of the southwest ivan would thrust sidewise the crown of the arch which carries most of the weight, were it not secured by a pair of lateral arches. Two other arches near the ends of the vault function similarly.

Other ribbed vaults in Persia also frankly reveal their structural function. The half-dome before the mihrab in the 15th century Masjid Bir-Chakmak of Yazd is supported by thin flat radial ribs salient in the groin by at least three feet, and curiously enough they are almost identical with the ribs in the cupola of the Cathedral of Coutances, and a number of other French monuments.

The scheme of ribs rectangular in section, springing at right angles from the wall, intersecting above and supporting a cupola (Isfahan Jami Vault No. 60) was apparently widely distributed. A famous example is found in the vault before the mihrab in the Great Mosque of Cordova built in 885 by El Hakim, who by his own witness sent for workmen from great distances. Here, however, according to the best judges, the system is not structurally employed. Ribs of similar character support in truly structural fashion several vaults (e.g. Hahpat).

¹¹ For the most effective criticism of the constructive character of these ribbed vaults, see Baltrusaitis, "Le problème de l'ogive et l'Arménie," pp. 35-55. M. Focillon is also sceptical (cf. Focillon, *Moyen Age*, Paris 1943, pp. 111 ff.) A detailed comment would require more space than is available.

A more complicated system used for huge domes like that of the Mausoleum of Sultan Sanjar at Merve, which was built before 1158, has several striking counterparts in the south of France (St. Marie d'Oloron, l'Hôpital Saint-Blaise and other buildings in the region of the Pyrenees.) The ribs are not strictly structural, but they are echoes or relics of forms that originated as supporting framework.

The relation between the Armenian and Iranian vault forms presents an especially difficult problem. Which were prior, and what was the relation between Armenian and Iranian architecture from the tenth to the twelfth century? The evidence favors the priority of Iranian forms. For example, stallactites such as appear in the Porch of the Apostles at Ani were anticipated by more than a century in buildings disclosed at Nishapur by the expedition of the Metropolitan Museum.¹²

The vault with cupola carried on ribs set at right angles to the wall, must, judging by Vault 60 in the Isfahan Jami, have had a long prior history in Iran. Colonettes and column clusters were highly developed in Armenia, as we see from the interior of the Cathedral of Ani. Possibly the verticality of the smaller Dome Chamber in the Isfahan Jami was derived from an Armenian source. It was not built until after the Seljuq conquest of Armenia, when it would have been easy for the acquisitive, open-minded Seljuk builders to profit by Armenian examples. But even so, there are prior elements in Iran. The prior angle columns are developed at Nayin and had a long history elsewhere in Iran and also in Mesopotamia. Iran had a powerful and inventive architectural tradition centuries before important buildings were undertaken in Armenia. Communication between

the two countries was continuous from Parthian times on.

It is certain, however, that the masonry vaults of Armenia do mark a great advance on the brick vaults of Iran in strength, precision and technical finish. Some of these, such as those of Horomos Vank, Hahpat, and Ani, as Baltrusaitis has shown with great force and clarity, are the immediate antecedents of the ogival vaults of Gothic architecture; the connections between individual monuments in France are no closer or any more evident than the connections with which he has established the Armenian parentage of the French ogival vaults.

In judging the structural character of the early Persian vaults, we must not be confused or distracted by the purely decorative displays which the later Persian builders affected. Patterns that are developed for the mere joy in the interplay of line are fundamentally different from structural forces, and it is highly improbable that the superficial network of lines which imitates or suggests the concealed mechanical forces within could have provided the inspiration for the design of the essential structure. The reverse is more probably true: it was the inner structure which suggested and controlled the decorative surface play, just as, in Persian practice as early as Seljuq times, bricks are often concealed with a coating of plaster in which the underlying brick forms, bond and all, are marked out, including brick end-plugs. Even so, in order to refine and more delicately control the expression of the inner mechanical forces, the Persians sometimes applied over a vault or dome a decorative network of ribs, which in later periods were nothing more than thin wooden strips covered with plaster, with little more strength than was needed to hold themselves in position. But however mechanically insignificant, they al-

¹² cf. Bull. of the Metropolitan Museum, Section II, Vol. 33, No. 11—1938, "The Iranian Expedition of 1937."

ways indicate operating forces, and with a poetry and elegance which are sometimes very effective. That the builders did wish to conceal the cruder structural forces in order to give them a more poetic expression is shown in the early vaults, where the structural part of the rib is hidden, and only the projecting edge of one line of bricks is permitted to show through the plaster coating. These are the ones which are so deceptive and seem structurally so insufficient to mechanically-minded Westerners. The later Persians were so averse to the frank display of the more elemental structural forces that powerful ribs were uniformly concealed.

The argument from the mechanics of structure can be pressed too far. The exact structural function of the ribs in the various Persian vaults cannot be precisely ascertained without the dissection of a vault or detailed photographs of ruined vaults, but in any case the conclusion would not be decisive. In many architectural forms, which at their inception were primarily devices to solve pressing problems, the aesthetic factor assumes increasing dominance with the development of greater competence and control. After all, the buildings under discussion are practically all State or religious structures. They were not merely planned for protection and durability, but were conceived as expressions of deep feeling, and their architectural quality is in the last result the projection of such feeling, "l'architect n'étant jamais un pur constructeur, mais étant toujours un artiste" (Focillon).

The confusion between architecture and engineering has led to many historical and aesthetic fallacies.¹³ Not mechanical veracity but the impressive effect, not engineering exactness but emotional expression, not the mere display of material forces but the spiritual response is the aim of the architect as artist. Psychological in-

tensity is sometimes more important than provable physical stability which looks and feels clumsy and inert. It is less essential that a building be physically powerful than that it appear so. It is more necessary architecturally that simple masses harmoniously composed should suggest reserve of power than that mechanical analysis should prove it to be there. The dome of St. Peter's does not look weak, but if the eight iron chains binding the drum were removed, it might collapse.

Both Persian and Gothic builders were striving for effect as much as stability. They both sought a well-integrated, rationally balanced play of forces. The colonnettes which emphasize the verticality of Gothic piers contribute little to their stability. The ribs which seem to strengthen the barrel vaults of Romanesque cathedrals actually diminish their strength. The seeming balance of forces in Gothic architecture which Viollet-le-Duc interpreted to mean that the whole structure was originally one—that the vault would collapse if a rib or buttress were removed—turned out under the cruel test of shattering bombardments somewhat deceptive.¹⁴ Ribs were severed but vaults stood. Presumably indispensable buttresses were fractured, but the roofs remained in place.

These facts, however, do not invalidate the psychological effect of a close-knit integrity nor the aesthetic function of non-constructive elements which emphatically seem to be constructive. We are not calculating engineering machines, and our sense of adequacy of structure is largely derived from childhood experiences, from the strength and character of our own bodily form and movements, not from tables and

¹³ See Geoffrey Scott, "The Architecture of Humanism." London, 1915.

¹⁴ cf. Pol Abraham, "Le Probleme de l'Ogive." Bull. des Instituts d'archéologie et d'histoire d'Art, Nov. 1935, also "Viollet le Duc et l'architecture rationaliste," Paris, 1936.

formulae. Just as the Gothic architects displayed with vivid eloquence structural power actively at work, so the Persians before them made use of similar processes and displayed similar power through exposed ribs, ponderous piers, soaring vaults, emphatically marking the direction of the forces engaged by the lay of the brick. The eye irresistibly follows parallel lines, and these are the more compepling if a line be composed of a thin edge of a large brick emphasized by a contrasting bond. Even if the Isfahan vaults are not absolutely perfect structurally, neither are some of the French vaults; and if some of the thirteenth century flying buttresses, such as those at Rheims, are wrongly placed and threaten rather than conserve the mechanical stability of the building, the effect on the spectator is not impaired; only a mathematical calculation reveals the defect.

Historians of architecture usually assume that architectural forms could be transmitted only by travelling masons. The mason alone was aware of certain technical processes, and since he was likely to be as conservative as he was expert, he commonly utilized his accustomed techniques wherever he went. Thus the tracing of techniques gives sure evidence of affiliations and influence.

But some architectural forms could also be transmitted visually. A patron seeing and admiring a general affect and the more conspicuous elements in a structure, could have them imitated. At the siege of Damascus Timur was so enamoured of the dome of the Mosque of al-Walid that he apparently determined on the spot to have an imitation of it made in marble at Samarkand, as Creswell noted.

3. The Pointed Arch

The pointed arch, though less vital structurally in Gothic architecture than the transverse vault and the ribbed vault, is

almost universal in the style and is essential to its aesthetic character. Moreover, it had structural uses which solved a number of troublesome mechanical problems. Apparently it was at first aesthetically objectionable to both the Persians and the French Gothic builders, for the Persians used wherever possible the stronger elliptical arch, and the French, the stouter and more familiar round arch. But finally it won its way, until in both the Gothic and the Persian style it became dominant.

In the Orient the pointed arch has existed from time immemorial. Both Egypt and Assyria used the pointed vault, though always in a small way. The pattern and the possibility for a larger use were established by Sasanian times. The back of the facade of the Taq-i-Kisra shows an arcade composed of arches pointed in outline. They are not true pointed arches structurally, as they are composed of a few large bricks joined at slight angles to one another, so that the continuous transmission of thrust in the curved line, which is the essence of pointed arch, is lacking; but it was necessary only to enlarge this form, using more or smaller bricks, to obtain a true pointed arch, and in a generally progressive architecture such a development was probably inevitable.

The earliest true pointed arch which has survived is that of Qasr-ibn-Wardan in Syria (561 A.D.). This is a brick structure and therefore, as Professor Shapiro has pointed out, must be regarded as intrusive in Syria since that was a stone-building region. It could have come in only from the east, where brick building was all but universal.

The earliest true pointed arches in Persia proper are in the Tarikh Khaneh of Damghan, which by the complete agreement of all who have studied it must have been built about 750. These, like the arch of Aasr-ibn-Wardan, are only slightly

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pointed, having been struck from two points only a little way apart. This is only a provincial structure continuing local Sasanian methods, hence it is impossible to say to what extent the form was used in monumental buildings of the seventh and eighth centuries which no longer exist, but in the Abbasid period in Baghdad, then almost completely under Persian dominance, the pointed arch was apparently almost universal, and the Nilometer in Cairo, built in 866 by an architect from Ferghana has four striking "Gothic" arches. Almost contemporary are the beautiful pointed arches in the Mosque of Ibn Tulun, and also those in the cistern of Ramleh in Philistia. Meanwhile by 894 when the Masjid-i-Jami of Shiraz was built the fully pointed arch was thoroughly established in Persia itself, though the round-headed arch was never entirely superseded there.

Thus the pointed arch was accessible to European builders long before they adopted it. In Egypt it was sure to be seen by merchants and pilgrims even before the Crusades. The earliest extant pointed arch in Europe is in the Bridge of the Admiral outside of Palermo, an admiral whose occupation took him frequently to the east Mediterranean where he could have seen many examples.

4. Compound Piers

Gothic architecture without its compound piers and column clusters would be sadly wanting. Greek, Roman and Egyptian columns are simple and solid. Persian, Armenian and Gothic piers are composite functionally or at least aesthetically. Does this affinity imply dependence? The compound piers of Ani give a probable answer, for Ani was dedicated in the year 1000, generations before any such pier was built in Europe.

But what of Persia? Compound piers of field-stone set in thin beds of mortar, a rude but significant form, appear in the

Masjid-i-Jami of Shiraz which was built in 894. The piers of the Masjid-i-Jami of Nayin (c. 960) have angle columns, while those of the "library vaults" of the Isfahan Jami can hardly be later than the tenth century, and they are even more complex. Though not sharply differentiated in function like true Gothic piers, these are very suggestive. The forces descending on them from the vaults above are clearly indicated and emphasized by the parallel lines of bricks. These are set vertically and edgewise in the mortar beds, while the bricks in the panel between the two arches are set horizontally as if to resist the pressures of the converging arches. In short, the Persian has done by line approximately what the Gothic pier-builder did by tracery, make his pier tell an emphatic and convincing story of forces engaged. In neither case is the story altogether true. In both cases it is effective and helps to create a vivid awareness of the structure and its contagious energies.

In general character these early Persian piers supporting pointed arches and interesting vaults resemble in a quite surprising way their later counterparts in France, such as the crypt of the Cathedral of Auxerre. The scale is the same, and what is more, the style and the feeling are the same. Again the resemblance is close between the crypts of Gothic France and such constructions as the "library vaults" of the Isfahan Jami.

5. Flying Buttresses

Another indispensable element of Gothic architecture is the flying buttress. This is universally assumed to be a unique invention of the French builders; yet there are Persian flying buttresses and the idea had a long development there. The essence of this brilliant device is the transference of a thrust across an open space. In its crudest possible form this is the function of the

little arch and pier in the Palace of Sarvistan.

The expanding thrust of the dome of the Mausoleum of Ismail the Samanid (d. 907 A.D.) in Bukhara is transferred by an arch across an open space to the outer wall at the four corners. That this takes place under a roof does not alter the actual process or minimize its significance. A similar device (eight instead of four arches) supports the dome of a mosque in Medina. This is in the open air.

The lateral pressure of the crown of the vault in the southwest ivan of the Isfahan Jami, which would naturally tend to thrust sidewise the peak of the main supporting arch, is taken up by what is, in effect, a flying buttress with two heavier buttresses on the end counterweighted just as the flying buttresses of Gothic architecture are weighted down by pinnacles. Here is, in effect, the transmission of a thrust in an arc across what is structurally a void. Similar arches weighted in the same way transmit the thrust from the peak of the half-dome of the northwest ivan to a secure anchorage in well abutted walls.

Near the Duwazdah Imam in Yazd there are two little flying buttresses which pick up the endwise thrusts of a fairly long vault. The flying buttress in three leaps at the Masjid-i-Jami of Yazd is probably not older than the sixteenth century, clearly subsequent to the very high vault of the portal. But this is not the first flying buttress that was attempted at Yazd. On the north side of the city in an open lot where there has been considerable excavation for soil, the expedition of the Iranian Institute in 1934 discovered a smaller flying buttress, the base of which was a good twenty feet below the present ground level. This must date from a much earlier period than the buttress of the Jami portal.

More striking and quite in the Gothic manner are the flying buttresses of a

mosque at Ghayin, in east Persia, not far from the Afghan border. There the thrust of the vault is taken up by two graceful, widely curving flying buttresses, the thrust of the portal arch by buttresses on the upper side in rectangular profile, in response to the Persian taste which prefers to frame an arch or constitute a facade by a series of rectangular panels. Functionally these squarely framed arches serve exactly the same purpose as the usual thin curving buttresses. This monument has not yet been studied, but from all appearances it should date from the beginning of the fourteenth century. Its closest analogue is the single-nave mausoleum of Pir-i-Bakran near Isfahan. In any case, such an elaborate and knowing construction had plenty of antecedents, and it is one more proof that Persian builders could think in the Gothic manner.

6. The Demand For Verticality

The tendency to verticality has been native to Persian architecture since Sasanian times, and long before that in the great temples of Babylon and Assyria vertical panels and slender, deep-cut channels (perhaps for drainage) decorated and lightened the somewhat inert masses. The lofty vaults of the Palace of Ardashir at Firuzabad, built in the early third century (possibly, as Herzfeld has suggested, the Castle of the Grail, for Amfortas was a Persian legend) rival in height the vaults of Gothic Europe, while the vault of the Taq-i-Kisra rises 90 feet in the clear.

Moreover, the preference for verticality continued. The noble tomb tower of Qabus-ibn-Washmgir at Gurgan, dedicated in the year 1006, nearly 200 feet high from its foundation, with sharply diverging prismatic flanges, is one of the most impressive expressions of verticality in architectural history. Similar tomb towers were erected all across north Persia and into Armenia, at Nachshirvan.

The columns of the mihrab at Nayin are thin and elongated, nearly thirty diameters high. Lofty pointed arched portals, sometimes over a hundred feet high, mark the entrances to all the important Persian mosques. Persian and Armenian verticality approach each other in the Cathedral of Ani, and the small dome chamber in the Isfahan Jami (1088 A.D.). Both antedate any comparable construction in Europe, and the interior of Ani is so completely in the Gothic manner and mood that the relation between Ani and the French Gothic lacks but little of proof.

Actual chronological priority of some of the Persian structures which have Gothic character cannot be proven, but however desirable this would be, it is not absolutely necessary in order to establish the probability that Oriental models did inspire the European forms. The dating of many of the existing Persian buildings is difficult; though some are, happily dated, and others are datable, many remain doubtful. But there are, after a manner of speaking, no single, individual monuments in Persia. They all represent types.

Europe has seen many surprising, and even relatively sudden architectural inventions; Persia few. The apparent abrupt innovations in certain styles is an historical illusion, due to the destruction of the antecedent examples. For every developed architectural form in Persia, it is necessary to assume, whether examples have survived or not, similar, usually simpler precedent structures, prior even by centuries. This is the reasonable, even if intellectually uncomfortable, procedure.

For the question at issue, however, dating of the Persian examples is less important than it might seem. Every important structural feature in Persian architecture has evolved slowly and cautiously. The squinch, for instance, has a history of nearly 2000 years. From the clumsy simple

squinch in the second century Parthian Fire Temple of Rabat-i-Safid, to the distinguished squinches of the early seventeenth century (Mashad, Mausoleum of Khwaja Rabbi), or even of the early eighteenth (Isfahan, Madrasa Mader-i-Shah) there has been a host of gradual refinements, created by industrious exploration of all the variants and by invention.

From the first transverse arches at Ivan-i-Kharka (c. 490) to those in the lovely oratory of the Masjid-i-Jami of Yazd—a full thousand years—there is chiefly repetition and slow development. Moreover, the great vault of the Ivan-i-Karka itself is on too large a scale, shows too complete a mastery of the structural processes involved not to have had many antecedents.

Other characteristic architectural designs have equally long histories, like a pointed arch with a rectangular panel above it, the whole framed in an imposing arch or set in a panel, which begins as early as the eighth century B.C. and lasts to the present.

How these elements of style and these technical constructive processes could have reached Europe from remote Iranian, or more proximate Armenian, sources is a special problem. Many studies have already been made on Oriental contributions to Western art; others are in process, and all throw light on this particular problems. For the moment a few general considerations must suffice.

From prehistoric times on there has been a general drift of Asiatic influence into European culture. Oriental elements in Classical art are more potent and specific than we had thought. The declining Roman Empire in its last days was thoroughly Orientalized. The tremendous wars between Sasanian Persia and Byzantium released a flood of influences into Europe. This steady cultural drift westward continued even in the darkest part of the

Middle Ages. Spain was, of course, Muslim. Sicily was a focus of Eastern influences. Merchants maintained trade and cultural relations with the Orient. Almeria in Spain was famous for its textiles, some of which the chroniclers tell us were woven in the style of Isfahan. A Persian merchant established headquarters at Misra (Cairo), one son remaining in Isfahan and the other in Almeria as agents. "Montpellier," wrote Benjamin of Tudela about 1170, "is a place very favorable to commerce. Here come for trade a crowd of Christians and Saracens, Arabs, merchants from Lombardy and Rome, every part of Egypt, from Palestine, Greece, Gaul, Spain, England, Genoa and Pisa. Here they speak every language."¹⁵ On the east, Iranian influences penetrated up through the Caspian and the Volga. Scandinavian and Iranian merchants met at Novgorod. More than 80,000 Iranian coins of the tenth century or earlier have been found in Scandinavia, as well as Persian weights and measures and other evidences of a lively and prolific trade. Longprier found many Persian and Oriental names in the cemeteries of old Gaul, as southern France had many colonies of Oriental merchants. Italy had been in continuous contact with the Orient since Classical times. St. Geneviève of Paris exchanged messages with Simon Stylites on his pillar by means of the French merchants traveling between France and Syria. In the upbuilding of the Church, both in ritual and in architecture, constant reference was necessary to the Oriental lands, the scene of the great events of Christendom, the land where traditions were still alive and presumably authentic. Thus, Abbot Suger "loved to talk with those who had been to Jerusalem."

Prior to the Crusades¹⁶ there was an

¹⁵ Quoted by Raymond Ray, "Les Vieilles Eglises Fortifiées," p. 106.

¹⁶ Jean Ebersolt, "Les Relations entre l'Europe et l'Orient avant Les Croisades," Paris.

immense traffic of pilgrims to the Holy Land, of such density and eagerness that it was necessary to impose severe travel restrictions. One could not board a vessel at Marseilles to the Holy Land without a return ticket.

The arts reflected these influences. The *coffre* belonging to Mr. Edward J. Holmes, which was found at Rayy and is inscribed and dated 1197, might well pass for a thirteenth or fourteenth century French original.¹⁷ Professor Monneret de Villard has found an important record of an Armenian prelate and an entourage of some 60 persons who came to northern Italy in the eleventh century, and this prelate was responsible for the construction of a small vaulted church north of Milan. The publication of this most significant discovery is eagerly awaited.

The fortified churches of the Midi reflect specific architectural forms of Syria, and both the crooked entrance and machicolis are Oriental in origin. A little church at Boulogne-sur-Mer reflects very closely the Bab-el-Futh in Cairo, which a company of Boulognaises must have seen on a visit to Cairo during the First Crusade.¹⁸ Scores of similar instances might be cited. The Prior of La Charité-sur-Loire was taken prisoner in the First Crusade,¹⁹ and Baghdad at the time was full of magnificent Seljuq architecture, the finest of it built under the patronage of Nizam-ul-Mulk, the famous vizier of Alp Arslan, and Malek Shah, under whose patronage the great dome of the Isfahan Masjid-i-Jami was built. The clocher at La Charité-sur-Loire, built after the Prior's return from his imprisonment, has a blind double

¹⁷ cf. "Survey of Persian Art," Vol. VI, pl 1303, A. B.

¹⁸ cf. Camille Enlart *L'Eglise du Wast et son portail arabe*,... *Gazette de Beaux Arts*, Ser. V, vol. 16 (1927).

¹⁹ I owe this reference to Miss Joan Evans, another significant document for which early publication is earnestly needed.

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arcade with a trefoil niche crowning the upper course which corresponds very exactly to the design of the Baghdad gate at Rakka. The model could have been derived from Spain, but the goor Prior could hardly have failed to see that gate, and it was, moreover, by no means unique, but must have had many parallels throughout the Orient.

Cathedrals like that of Le Puy were replete with Oriental influence, including ornamental Kufic inscriptions,²⁰ one unmistakable proof of the actual presence there of Muslim workers.

Even the facades sometimes show marked similarities. The Baghdad Gate of Rakka with its arched portal and two lateral arcaded galleries, the facade of Rabbath Ammon in Transjordan, such mosques as that of Asterjan with its vaulted entrance and paired tower-like minarets which opens into a long nave, all are congenial to the Gothic spirit, and the earlier examples definitely antedate comparable Gothic compositions. Some of the elements have, no doubt, Hellenistic sources, but these were further developed in the Near East and received the stamp of Sasanian and Early Islamic architecture. The little church at Airaines and Mouen with their blind arcades are examples of many which reflect the Oriental mode.

One consideration is likely to militate against the thesis of an alien contribution to Gothic architecture, the theory that it is possible to form a series of structural elements from French buildings which develop almost imperceptibly out of one another from the very most primitive beginnings. From this it is inferred that the completed style was a gradual and continuous fulfillment out of these simple origins, so that any idea of intervention

from external influences is superfluous.

There is perhaps a common logical fallacy concealed here. A continuous series is not necessarily generative. There is no real causal or productive relation in the number system, and nigh indiscernibles can be arranged in an order which is so continuous as to seem to be homogeneous and self-generating. But even such apparently continuous systems can be stimulated and nourished from outside, and the tentative beginnings may easily be the record and imitation of novel suggestions timidly adopted with the minimum of variation from accepted styles. Such a series can be repeatedly sustained and invigorated from external sources without serious dislocation.

The notion of spontaneous cultural generation, like the theory of parallel independent inventions of complex techniques, styles and conceptions, has in recent years under the relentless pressure of fact given way to the more realistic theory that cultural process is the result of challenge and interchange between contrasting cultures, where the differentiation becomes the motive power for new achievement.

The flood of constructive influences that poured into Europe from the East both before, and in greater volume after the Crusades touched every phase of Western life. It would be strange indeed if the West could have learned from the East many of the refinements of life—manners, costumes, music, calligraphy—could have modeled their poetry as did the troubadours and the minnesingers, on Eastern models could have taken over from the same source chivalry and heraldry, could have respected and utilized Eastern methods in business and finance, could have adopted Eastern techniques in their fortifications, copying for example the form of the walls of Antioch (Agde, Castelnaud-

²⁰ cfa. Fikry, *L'art Roman du Puy . . . Paris*, 1934.

Pégayrolles, Royat, Luchean)²¹, could have imitated Eastern brick-work by the *petit appareil*, could have reproduced the Persian squinch, the blind arcade, copied many decorative motives; could have done all this and yet been indifferent or unresponsive to the suggestions which could have led directly to the solution of their most urgent problem—how to build their churches for the new era.²²

Pol Abraham

Nouvelle Explication de l'architecture religieuse gothique, Gazette des Beaux Arts, Paris, 1934

Viollet le Duc et l'architecture rationaliste—Paris, 1934

Marcel Aubert

Les plus anciennes croisées d'ogives . . . — Paris, 1934

Jurgis Baltrusaitis

Etudes sur l'art medieval en Georgie et en

²¹ Raymond Ray, "Les vieilles eglises fortifies," Chapter II.

²² The problem of the origins and development of Gothic architecture is by no means as simple as it can be made to sound. All the terms need the most searching and precise criticism: affiliation, imitation, copying—transference by actual workmen, independent invention, the mingling and degeneration of forms—all these need clarification and specification. To distinguish between superficial resemblances or the apparent identity of certain details, and the more important and fundamental community of principles, that come from ways of thinking, from common attitudes towards common problems, this is one of the primary tasks of the historian of architecture—an approach that has always distinguished the work of the late Henri Focillon, whose discussion of the very complicated problem of the ribbed vault in his *Moyen Age* remains a model and masterpiece. M. Aubert has given the fullest history of the *croise d'ogives*, and M. Baltrusaitis has made the most brilliant single contribution to the problem of origins. Of the vast literature on Gothic architecture only a relatively small proportion is given to the question of Oriental influences. The following brief list may be of some help to those who want to pursue this very significant problem.

Armenie—Paris, 1928

Le Probleme de l'ogive et l'Armenie—Paris, 1933

J. Puig-i-Cadafalch

La geographie et les origines du premier art roman — Paris, 1935, especially Chap. VI Les Origines

Auguste Choisy

L'Histoire de l'Architecture, Paris, 1899

K. A. C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture (2 vols.), Oxford, cf. especially sections on the squinch and the pointed arch

Jean Ebersolt

Orient et Occident—Paris, 1928-29

Camille Enlart

Manuel d'archeologie francaise, Architecture religieuse—Paris, 1919

L'Eglise du Wast en Bouglonnais et son portal arabe, Gazette des Beaux Arts, Ser. 5, V-16, (1927)

Abmad Fikry

L'art Roman du Puy et les influences islamiques Paris, 1934

Henri Focillon

Moyen Age—Paris, 1943

Art d'Occident, Le Moyen Age Roman et Gothique—Paris, 1938

Elie Lambert

Les premiers voutes nervees francaises et les origines de la croise d'ogives—Revue archeologique, 1933

Les voutes nervees hispano-moresques et leur influence possible sur l'art Chretien—Hesperis, V—(1928)

Robert de Lasteyrie

L'architecture religieuse en France a l'epoque romane—Paris, 1912

A. Kingsley-Porter

Lombard Architecture, 1917

J. Vallery-Radot

Eglises Romanes—Paris, Coll. A traverse l'art francais

Raymond Rey

Les vieilles eglises fortifies, Paris, 1925

Survey of Persian Art

(Pope, ed.) 7 volumes, Oxford, 1938—Articles, photographs and drawings by Schroeder, Reuther, Monneret de Villard, Pope, Vols. I, II, V, VI.

V. Sabouret

Levolution de la voute du milieu du XIe siecle au debut du XIIIe—Paris, 1934

Marquis de Vogue

Architecture civile du Ier au VIe siecle dans la Syrie centrale—Paris, 1866-1877

Henri Terrasse

L'art Hispano-Mauresque—Paris, 1932

Prayers Heard

EGHIA BAGHDAD

*Being my mother's only wish,
I used to serve for the church
When I was about nine.*

*As I remember now
It was a very hard task
To follow the priests
In whatever they do
From baptism
To funeral,
As well as commemorating
Every feast and fast—
And above all,
Sometimes I used to
Climb to the bell tower
In the middle of the Mass
To help the old man
With the mighty bell.*

*Our church and the school
Were in the same big yard,
A part of which was
Appropriated for the eternal-rest-residence
Of people of wealth—
But for me I used to prefer
Our other yard
Which was out of town,
Surrounded with big, high trees.*

*And one day
We had a very long
Poem to memorize
For the literature class—
Actually memorizing poems
Was almost a part
Of our life
And daily bread,*

*More likely when
Our literature professor
Was a poet himself,
Though an unknown one;
And because the day before
Was my birthday, I thus
Had never a chance
To keep even the first line
By heart.*

*It was the recreation period
And only a few minutes later
We were to enter the classes—
And it was the poetry subject.
My heart was throbbing
Hearing the professor's cry:
I will instill love for poetry in you
Even if I have to tear you apart!—
That was but a few days ago!*

*Oh, God—I prayed—
Please, let somebody die
So that I should be called
For the funeral service
And be skipped from my
Poetry class!*

*There was no sign yet
If my prayers were heard,
And the bell for the class stirred
And we stood in rows to enter
Into our classes.*

*But as we were about to
Go in, my prayers
Were answered—Lo!
The church bell began tolling!
And I flew for my profession.*

*The deceased was one of God's sheep,
A great man of wealth,
And the hole digger
Was doing his job
With great enthusiasm,
Digging it longer and deeper
Than it was necessary.*

*Giving him full-length formalities
By the altar, (knees),
Which lasted more than
A couple of hours
Because there was a lecture as well
On what a great, fine man he was,*

*We finally took him to his
Great, fine, expensive hole.*

*It needed more than a couple
Of men to place him perfectly into
His "from dust to dust" world
As he was a great, big man;
And the tears from all shapes of eyes
Were irresistible. . .
My eyes glistened
As I watched and listened
To his two beloved sons
Whispering:
Our prayers have been finally heard!*

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AN INQUIRY Into the TURKISH MASSACRES OF 1894 - 1897

GREGORY ARABIAN

Chapter Five:

The Role of the Sultanate

Originally I had planned to entitle this chapter "The Personal Responsibility of Sultan Abdul Hamid," but a few of the following considerations changed my mind. First of all, although there is a natural eagerness to find a "scape-goat" for all the fortunes and misfortunes of history, I think that the historian employing such a personal approach tends to limit his vision—necessarily so. Secondly, the position of Sultan Hamid was at the head of a government. Despotism though he may have been, nevertheless, an executive at the head of any government is a busy man—so busy that he must needs overlook many minor and even major details of government, relying on others for efficient and reliable administration. Lastly, and most important, the advisors and other inferior officers of the Sultanate were not the ablest one could employ. Many officers of Hamid's personal cavalry were convicted criminals;¹⁴³ others, though possessing virtuous potentialities deliberately distorted reports and censored accounts merely to please the Sultan. They did this partly out of the desire of personal advancement, and of covering up any of their personal corruption.¹⁴⁴ Therefore, a

combination of the foregoing determinants all directly influencing a notoriously despotic and extremely inefficient governmental system, must be considered when discussing the role of the autocracy.

One of the most common apologies aimed at absolving Sultan Hamid and his advisors of all responsibility is the argument that they were misinformed.¹⁴⁵ These arguments emphasize the inefficiency of governmental administration by officers directly dependent upon the Sultan and eager for decorations and promotions.¹⁴⁶ They cite the common evil of any rigid autocracy: misinformation calculated to please the despot and to suppress all doubt and argument. Therefore, the apologists conclude, the Sultan was actually a prisoner behind a wall of fallacious accounts. He had no one to trust. His only way to check one story was to appoint someone else who merely would turn out to be another corrupt misinformant, coming up with one of his own. Consequently, the Sultan, acting upon these false accounts and "bad intelligence" could scarcely do anything else but judge things incorrectly and give commands insufficient to cope with the real circumstances. So, the Sultan

¹⁴³ "Armenia and the Powers: From Behind the Scenes," (Anonymous) *The Contemporary Review*, p. 629 ff. (LXIX January-June 1896)

¹⁴⁴ Hyvernatt, "Armenia, Past and Present: Helplessness of the Porte," p. 324.

¹⁴⁵ Hepworth, *Through Armenia on Horseback*, p. 8.

¹⁴⁶ Salmone, "The Massacres in Turkey," p. 671-672.

in this way was really not responsible for acts and decrees he ordered.¹⁴⁷

In support of this argument, travellers and historians cite situations where Kurdish *Valis* or provincial governors themselves administered in a corrupt and inefficient manner. They feared detection of this corruption by the central government which might easily replace him from such an influential and lucrative position. To cover themselves, the Kurdish *Valis* commonly extorted confessions from Armenians to the effect that a conspiracy was afoot against the government. The governors would then employ irregular troops to "suppress" the conspiracy by looting and destroying the homes of suspects.¹⁴⁸

In this case, resistance justified though it may have been, became a pretext for further pillage and even massacre. In addition, the *Vali* could send for regular Turkish troops claiming he had discovered a "major Rebellion." Turkish forces thus ordered would be involved in a massacre without even knowing the truth.¹⁴⁹

The results of incidents like this would be elementary. The *Vali* would have successfully covered himself against any claim of governmental corruption and receive commendation from the Sultan for keenness in discovering such a plot. Besides this, the fact that the alleged conspiracy was specifically blamed upon the Armenians, whom the Sultan personally disliked, further endeared the *Vali* to Abdul Hamid, and aided personal aggrandizement. The governor thus showed his master that he was doing a good job, despite the fact that the fear of conspiracy was a hollow one. Lastly, Turkish troops and Mohammedan mobs, joining the irregulars for their share of plunder would be involved upon false

pretexts. A massacre would therefore have been accomplished upon misinformation—something for which the Sultan and his autocracy could not really be blamed.

Many observers have repeatedly held that all of the servitors of the Sultan were bent on decoration and promotion.¹⁵⁰ Therefore, they either blew up or played down reports as suited their interests. The report of the massacre at Erzerum, claiming over 2,000 Armenian dead, is a case in point. When interviewed, the *Vali* related that Armenians, fully armed, encircled the mosque of the city, surrounding those within it, definitely bent on slaughtering them as they came out. He continued that despite the superior force of the fully armed Armenians, the unarmed Moslems rushed upon them, snatched their guns and swords with great valor, and suppressed the beginning of an insurrection. In the fifteen minute skirmish, he concludes, the toll was one house burned, 39 Turks killed, and 150 wounded. As for the Armenians, only a handful were killed.¹⁵¹ A missionary who witnessed the massacre said that this was gross extortion. He stated that it was customary for Kurds and Turks to carry daggers and other weapons and that no Armenian dared be armed lest he be suspected of revolutionary activity. This same missionary claimed that throughout the villages, he had personally seen some forty to fifty houses and shops completely looted and razed; hundreds upon hundreds of Armenians slaughtered.¹⁵² Frederick Greene, a resident in Armenia, was fortunate enough to receive a picture of the burial pit at Erzerum which corroborates this.¹⁵³ In the face of such

¹⁴⁷ Hepworth, *Through Armenia on Horseback*, p. 169-170.

¹⁴⁸ Hyvernast, "Armenia, Past and Present: Helplessness of the Porte," p. 324.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Peterson, "Turkey and the Armenian Crisis," p. 666.

¹⁵¹ Hepworth, *Through Armenia on Horseback*, p. 240 ff.

¹⁵² Hepworth, *Through Armenia on Horseback*, p. 340 ff.

¹⁵³ Greene, *The Rule of the Turk*, p. 34.

conflicting reports, the truth was often difficult to obtain. It resulted often in misinformation, in which the Sultan probably had no part and therefore was not responsible—so claim the apologists of Sultan Hamid's autocracy.

One last point of support in respect to proving the Sultan was misinformed is the factor of government censorship. This well-known and widespread "program of universal repression of all freedom of speech and thought" went to such extremes that no one bothered to "read a Turkish newspaper — it contained nothing worth reading."¹⁵⁴ The policy of censorship was as widespread as it was intense; the multifold system of bureaucratic censors so filtered and redistilled dispatches and reports as to render them useless for the Sultan's use. Weeding the dispatches of undesirable material, the censors and "omnipresent" secret police acted often unfettered in their authority.¹⁵⁵ The foregoing arguments have been presented on behalf of those believing the Sultan was really misinformed, along with his principal officers, and therefore acted upon "bad intelligence." They will never hesitate to agree that the Sultan and the Turkish government organized massacres specifically designed to exterminate the Armenians,¹⁵⁶ but will hold that, more important, since the autocracy was so utterly misinformed as to the real truth of the circumstances, he is to be forgiven for his acts.

There is another side equally contested and firmly held that misinformation is to be discounted as a factor, and that the Sultan is to be held personally responsible, due to his near insanity and malicious in-

tent against the Armenian people.¹⁵⁷

The first of these discounting utterly the fact that the Sultan was ill-informed is Ismail Kemal Bey, the Sultan's own cabinet officer. This trusted advisor strongly attests

to the peculiar and the unusual openness with which the Sultan heard everything, even in the most disagreeable manner.¹⁵⁸ His memoirs are full of plans he himself engineered for collective appeals and demands to be delivered before the Sultan not only by ministers, Pashas, and representatives of the Turkish government, but by foreign representatives and ambassadors. In practically every case, he showed unequivocally that the Sultan made decisions of policy concerning these massacres, assuming complete responsibility for his decisions after he heard and read verbal arguments most fully.¹⁵⁹ This is strong testimony in favor of discounting the theory that the Sultan was uninformed or ill-informed.

In addition to the above, others affirmed that the Sultan was fully informed of the massacres, especially of that in Sassoun, and that he denied, even on protest by the foreign powers that anyone had been massacred.¹⁶⁰ The Sultan kept up a "pretence of arrogance and indifference" in answer to England's protest, it is held, and he was grimly pleased that the Queen had to find "recourse to prayers and not to demands."¹⁶¹ Indeed, by this time, the Sultan "had defied England, taught his subjects a lesson, and cemented German friendship; his reign was proceeding with glory." In this way does Mr. Davis discount any attempt to apologize for the Sultan's actions,

¹⁵⁴ "Sultan Abdul Hamid," (Anonymous) *The Contemporary Review*, p. 43-44.

¹⁵⁵ Davis, *A Short History of the Near East*, p. 357. (Hepworth, *Through Armenia on Horseback*, p. 147.)

¹⁵⁶ Hepworth, *Through Armenia on Horseback*, p. 147.

¹⁵⁷ Salmone, "The Massacres in Turkey," p. 435 ff.

¹⁵⁸ Ismail Kemal Bey, *Memoires*, p. 270.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ "Armenia and the Powers," (Anonymous) p. 629 ff.

¹⁶¹ "Armenia and the Powers," (Anonymous) p. 629 ff.

replacing it with a definite charge of malicious intent.¹⁶²

On this argument for misinformation, the field is obviously wide, fully contested, and uncompromising. But the real question, when pondered over, can, I believe, be boiled down to this: referring to the salient needs of the Armenian subjects, was the Sultan and his Autocracy fully informed before they did or did not act upon them? The problem, attacked from an angle of this sort, is facilitated by a third group of factors.

It is a known fact that the foreign powers felt the need to preserve the "exceedingly brittle diplomatic crockery known as the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire"¹⁶³ by not directly intervening to produce a flare-up. Nevertheless, they were not asleep. The British, who assumed guardianship for Armenians in the Cyprus Convention, maintained consulates throughout Armenia. These consulates, unfettered by any censor, faithfully reported and strongly protested practically every incident of importance. The British "Blue Books" contain a most complete compilation of these incidents.¹⁶⁴ As far back as 1890, four years before the actual outbreak, the British consul at Erzerum reported the beginnings of cruelty and outrage, and the cumulative effects of these upon the people.¹⁶⁵ The next year, and all through 1891 Sir Clifford Lloyd reported that the Turkish government had embarked upon a "deliberate policy" to fail to protect the Christians.¹⁶⁶ He gave full accounts of every instance of pillage and murder which occurred. With respect to the Sultan himself, these above uncensored reports were brought to his fullest attention as early as

1890. In addition, Lord Eversley personally conferred with him, pressing forward stories of such injustice.¹⁶⁷ The Queen of England herself dispatched a special message as activity grew more intense, and Sir Phillip Currie constantly and most persistently reported and protested to the Sultan in person, presenting at every turn schemes to effectuate reforms and alleviate conditions.¹⁶⁸

With respect to the French, too, avenues of information were kept open and flowing. The "Yellow Books" of the French foreign office are similar to the British "Blue Books" in that they are official compilations of the French consulates.¹⁶⁹ Like the British, the French maintained consulates throughout Armenia, began reporting to its government as early as 1890 incidents of agitation and oppression.¹⁷⁰ Like the British government also, most of these reports were kept under cover by the respective governments, while Russia joined British and French consuls in frequent joint protests, fully outlining grievances and often suggesting remedies in person, rather than resort to written protests exclusively.

The foregoing set of facts make it very difficult for me to believe that the Sultan was misinformed as to the significant needs and happenings within his Empire. Despite the factors of rigid censorships, governmental inefficiency and corruption, still the definitive reports and personal protests and conferences with the Sultan of foreign representatives unfettered in restriction,

¹⁶⁴ Interview with Haigaz Kazarian of The Hairenik Press, November 25, 1953.

¹⁶⁵ "Armenia and the Powers," (Anonymous) p. 629 ff.

¹⁶⁶ "Armenia and the Powers," (Anonymous) p. 629 ff.

¹⁶⁷ Eversley and Chirol, *The Turkish Empire*, p. 341.

¹⁶⁸ Ismail Kemal Bey, *Memoires*, p. 265 ff.

¹⁶⁹ Interview with Haigaz Kazarian, November 25, 1953.

¹⁷⁰ Victor Berard, *La Politique du Sultan*, p. x.

¹⁶² Davis, *Short History of the Near East*, p. 358. Here, the cementing of German friendship refers to the official state visit made by Kaiser Wilhelm II. Such an unusual occurrence gave the Sultan great confidence.

¹⁶³ "The European Partners in Asia," (Anonymous) p. 629.

proof that the Sultan knew what was going on. As an apology, therefore, I do not feel that of misinformation can be reasonably claimed.

Besides this major point of misinformation as a significance in explaining the role of the autocracy, a few minor points exist which might all fall under the headings of "ulterior motives." There was some weight and much controversy over the fact that because the Sultan had definitely decided upon a policy influenced by ulterior motives which could not accommodate reform or conciliation, it made no difference whether he was or was not informed.

Sultan Hamid was primarily interested in the security of the throne and the entrenchment of the autocracy. The threats to this security he saw from two directions: external and internal. He handled international threats to his security and integrity of his empire by playing off one power against another in "a game of unscrupulous opportunism—by a constant run of expedients to postpone the day of reckoning for the Ottoman Empire."¹⁷¹ The method in which he quickly exploited incidents of wavering and indecision among the foreign powers has been fully covered above.¹⁷² Internal threats were handled in much the same fashion. Instead of allowing the motley races within the Empire unite to destroy him, the Sultan pitted one race against the other. Offering the unruly Kurds and Circassians plunder, decorations, and uniforms, and justifying their actions with religious exhortations and claims of insurrection, he set them against the Armenians of the Empire, resulting in a policy of race extinction.¹⁷³

Intermingled with the Sultan's concern for the security of the autocracy was the

stainless in their integrity give reasonable

¹⁷¹ Davis, *Short History of the Near East*, p. 354.

¹⁷² See Chapter Three.

¹⁷³ Toynebee, *Armenian Atrocities*, p. 21.

attitude which he and many of his subjects held in regards to the Armenian. Just as he used the pretexts of religion and revolution to justify slaughter aimed at suppression of any threat to his throne, so did Abdul Hamid and his officers use this convenient and opportunistic hate psychology against the Armenian population. The reasons for this hate we shall now study.

Armenian commercial enterprises had risen to their heights in the early 1890's. In Trebizond and Constantinople, trading, governing, and banking were all handled chiefly by Armenians. The Turk had neither the instinct nor the drive to enter vigorous trade competition; often the Armenian would either outsell him or sell him out.¹⁷⁴ Armenian trade from Turkey to British centers like Manchester gave England definite cause for concern about the Armenian population exclusively.¹⁷⁵ Such interference by a foreign power in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire, partial to one of its segments, aroused jealousy and indignation both from the Sultan and from his Mohammedan subjects as well.¹⁷⁶ However, from the standpoint of historical truth, I believe that the factor of Armenian commercial enterprise as causing hatred against the Armenians as a whole is over-emphasized. The overwhelming majority of Armenians led an agricultural life, tilled their land, and saved their money.¹⁷⁷ The great mass of Armenians in the interior of the country were poor, obliged to support their families through the fruits of hard labor.¹⁷⁸ But just as the factor of Armenian commercial enterprise should not be play-

¹⁷⁴ John Burns, "The Massacres in Turkey," *The Nineteenth Century*, p. 655 ff.

¹⁷⁵ Ismail Kemal Bey, *Memoires*, p. 256.

¹⁷⁶ Hepworth, *Through Armenia on Horseback*, p. 54.

¹⁷⁷ Interview with James H. Tashjian of the *Armenian Review*, December 19, 1953.

¹⁷⁸ T. C. Trowbridge, *Occasional Papers in regard to Turkey*, p. 52.

ed down, neither should the poverty of the masses be played up. Through the hard labor and extreme measures of thrift, even the Armenian peasant had a relatively better existence than his Turkish or Kurdish neighbor . . . therefore, he still had something worth robbing.

This final group of factors is, I think, as close an explanation as one can get in regards to the motives and responsibilities of the Ottoman autocracy for the Armenian Massacres. A motley selection of fears, hopes, hates, and other emotions all contributed to the decision of policy. This decision was definitely made in the early years of 1890, and the policy, as simple as it was fantastic was the extermination of a people belonging to one nationality. The reader is again invited to draw his conclusions from this all too brief historical record.

Conclusions

I have tried to list, in the foregoing chapters, a few of the reasons why the Armenian Massacres began and continued as long as they did. As a result of this moderately exhaustive search undertaken to determine the roles of religion and revolutionary activity; of international demands and a despot's fears, we must remember that neither of these taken individually can completely account for the slaughters of 1894-97. Some, like the fear of revolution, and prejudice against a nationality may have provided the motives which produced the action. Others, such as the claim of religious sanction and the crusade for conversion might justify the action and thereby insure that the fears would not materialize.

But if there is one inescapable fact from which I find it difficult to depart, it is this: the Armenian massacres occurred because someone or group caused them to occur; they continued for three long and costly years simply because no one or group

would take the trouble to stop them.

The person or group causing these widespread massacres undertook by organization the selective extermination of a nationality. That organization and planning existed is attested to by the facts of the oft-remembered trumpet signals, the deliberate arming of mobs by the local police, and the repeated assemblage of Mohammedans within their mosques prior to each slaughter. That careful selectivity was practiced is shown by the fact that hardly any Mohammedan was injured; scarcely any non-Armenian Christians (notably the Greeks) were hurt. This group of massacres constituted the result of a policy, a decision; that decision was made by the only power—the supreme religious, political, and military power—in the area: The Ottoman Empire. In stating this to be a policy, I believe that I have stated a truth, a fact. The policy thus stated, the judgment of its values remains open to debate.

I stated that the massacres continued because no one or group could or would take the trouble to stop them. The perpetrator, the government of the Porte, continued because he wanted to further a set policy; internal forces, therefore, would not stop the slaughters. The only other force capable of facing the power of the government of Turkey was the unimpeded force of the government of another sovereign power. France, England, Russia could either singly or in concert have stopped it if they wanted to, dared to, or decided to end it. That they did not is a self-indictment upon the integrity of international diplomacy in this era and in this area. None of the international powers feared the Turkish government; they feared each other's greedy pretensions upon the "sick man of Europe" whose death never came. It is extremely difficult to weigh the relative importance between the two factors: a decision to permit the

slaughters to continue, which is an action of the will, and a fear lest intervention prove harmful to the interests of the intervening nation involved, which is hesitation resulting from fear. Both factors were involved and related. They permitted continuance of the massacres and thereby resulted in an abandonment of an international issue unveiled at Berlin in 1878-20 years before. This is what happened, a fact, decision, policy not to intervene.

Again, judgment upon such international lethargy is open to debate, rationalization, or apology.

As for myself, I do not believe that the decision made by Turkey nor that of the foreign powers is very creditable; both decisions contributed to the massacres of one-half million souls in three years. I believe, finally, in this case, that he who does is slightly more to be reprimanded than he who could have done otherwise.

● A BOOK-LENGTH TRANSLATION:

A HISTORY OF ARMENIA

HRAND PASDERMAJIAN

CHAPTER IV

Armenia Under the Rule of Tiridates' Successors (100-224)

Tiridates I was succeeded by Axidares, 100-103; Pharthamasiris, 113-114; Parthaspates, 116-117; Valarces I, 117-140; Sohemus, 140-178; Sanatroukes, 178-216; Valarces II, 216-217; and Tiridates II (or Khosrov), 217-238.

During this entire period Armenia was caught in the conflicts between Rome and the Parthians and, as a result of the Parthian origin of her new dynasty, inevitably, she often took the Parthian side.

After a relatively long period of peace, in 113 a new war broke out between Rome and the Parthians over the status of Armenia and probably provoked by the active policy of Emperor Trajan. In this war the Armenian king sided with the Parthians. The Roman army was at first defeated but later took the offensive under the direct command of the Emperor who reconquered Armenia and later Mesopotamia.

In pursuance of his policy of destroying the buffer states, Trajan annexed Armenia to the Roman Empire and converted it into a Roman province to be governed by a proconsul (Governor) in 114.¹ Trajan

ordered the Armenian King Parthamasiris to leave the country, but when the latter stubbornly refused and insisted on his rights, he had him slain. Trajan has immortalized his invasion of Armenia through an inscription representing his victorious army and the deposed Armenian king. We find a reproduction of this inscription on Constantine's Arch of Triumph in Rome.

Armenia's status as a Roman province lasted but three years. In 117 Emperor Adrian, the successor of Trajan, made Armenia an autonomous state and an ally of Rome. Rome would have the right to maintain a garrison in Armenia.² It is known that in Dacia (Transylvania and Romania), one of the outskirts of the Roman empire, Trajan's policy of eliminating the buffer states had far more serious and lasting effects. Here Trajan destroyed a backward but warlike people which later could play an important role in closing one of the gates of the empire before the barbarian inroads.

During the reign of Adrian Armenia enjoyed a period of peace under her king Valarces I. The same was true of the reign of his successor Antonius the Pious, a model emperor whose reign extended the peace to the whole world (138-161). King Va-

¹ See Renan, *Histoire des Origines du Christianisme*, Vol. V., Paris, 1877, page 500-502.

² Renon, *Ibid.*, Vol. VI, Paris, 1879, page 6.

larces III of the Parthians planned to invade Armenia under king Sohemus but the Emperor intervened and stopped him.³ Of him Renan justly has written: "He was the most perfect sovereign who ever reigned. To enumerate his virtues would be to catalog the qualities of the perfect man. For twenty-three years the world was governed by a father."⁴ It was after the death of this ideal emperor in 161 that the war was resumed between Rome and the Parthians, always over Armenia.

Mommsen has compared Rome's sovereignty over Armenia to the German emperor's sovereignty over Italy in the Middle Ages. No matter how totally nominal, many Armenians and Parthians regarded it as an unjust intrusion and this attitude was a cause of perpetual wars.⁵

The Parthians again occupied Armenia with the aid of the Armenians, their joint armies having inflicted a crushing defeat on the Roman legions at Elegeia (Erzeroum). But the Romans brought their legions of the Rhine to replace the Eastern legions who had failed to live up to their mission. In 163 the Roman general Priscus reconquered Armenia and reoccupied the capital of Artaxata which again was razed to the ground. Not far from Artaxata, the Armenians built a new city called Vagharshapat which later became the Holy See of Etchmiadzin.

The armies of Emperor Marcus Aurelius continued the war against the Parthians which ended in the capture of their capital, the City of Ctesiphon in 165. Rome now extended her frontiers to the East as far as Mesopotamia, but all the same, she again recognized the autonomy of Armenia as a buffer state whose existence was vital to Roman interests.

After these victories in the East which

were accompanied by his successes in the west, Marcus Aurelius erected a magnificent monument which is seen in Rome to this day, bearing the inscription: "Emperor Aurelius, having conquered in a great war the Armenians, the Parthians and the Germans, dedicates this monument bearing the inscription of his feats to his father, Emperor Antonius the Pious."⁶

During the reign of Emperor Septimius Severus the war was resumed between Rome and the Parthians but this time not over Armenia but over Mesopotamia. In 198 Ctesiphon was captured and was pillaged by the Romans, one hundred thousand natives were deported and sold into slavery, and the whole of Mesopotamia was annexed to the empire. However, Armenia under King Sanatroukes was allowed to retain her independence, probably in reward of her neutral attitude in a war which did not concern herself and which was waged entirely in Mesopotamia.

In the reign of Emperor Caracalla who was a savage madman Armenia was obliged to wage her last national war against Rome. Through a ruse Caracalla arrested King Valarces of Armenia and his queen and when the Armenians rose up against him, he sent an army of invasion under the command of General Theocritus who was badly defeated in 216.⁷ Caracalla continued the war against the Armenians and the Parthians but in the end he was killed by his own soldiers in Mesopotamia.

This was the last of the wars among the Armenians, the Parthians and the Romans. The third century, indeed, was to witness two events of major importance which were to effect a profound change in the situation of the Middle East and would give the Armenian policy a new direction which we shall point out in the next chapter. In 224 the Parthian dynasty in Iran

³ J. Capitolinus.

⁴ Renan, *Ibid.* Vol. VI, pp. 295-296.

⁵ Mommsen, Vol. V., page 405.

⁶ Sandalgian, II., page 554.

⁷ Sandalgian, II., page 559.

was overthrown and was replaced by the Sassanians. On the other hand, between 235 and 290, the Roman empire was going through a period of disorder, disintegration and even anarchy.

The Status of Armenia Under Roman Sovereignty

During those periods of Roman sovereignty Armenia enjoyed a status of autonomous existence and was even independent, governed by her own laws and maintaining her private armies. Mommsen stresses this point, reminding that Armenia was never subject to Roman taxation.⁸

The Roman compulsory military draft was never exercised in Armenia. The Armenian contingents fighting beside the Roman armies fought as Armenian units under their own commanders, as well as Armenian volunteers whose number was great in Roman legions.

From financial standpoint, if we discount the lootings in periods of occupation, Armenia's sacrifice was not extended beyond the cost of maintaining the Armenian contingents at the disposal of the Romans, or, on certain occasions, Armenia supplied part of the cost of occupation. On the other hand, there were times when Rome advanced important financial aid to Armenia as part of maintaining the Armenian army which the Romans regarded as a definite security against the northern menace.

The Organization and Government of the Armenian Kingdom

The Armenian historian Moses of Khorene has given us a description of the Armenian court and its organization under King Valarces (Vagharshak), 117-140, which proves that Armenia had attained a high degree of development. It should be added, however, that since the establishment of the Arsacid Dynasty, Armenia had adopted many institutions and laws which

prevailed among the Parthians and the religious influence was clearly visible on the Armenian civilization of the time.

Khorenatzi (Moses of Khorene) tells us that Valarces had a court in which the prerogatives were divided among the most distinguished families of the nobility. The Bagratid (Bagradouni) family, for instance, whose name we shall encounter in later centuries of Armenian history, had the hereditary right of commanding the royal cavalry. One of its members, again, had the prerogative of placing the royal crown on the king's head.

Other families of the nobility divided among themselves the other hereditary prerogatives, such as the Senechal, the Grand Chamberlain, the Superintendent of royal hunting expeditions, the provender of the royal granaries, etc. The king granted great fiefs to the families of the high nobility. At the same time he took a great number of measures pertaining to the maintenance of the army and the organization of the country. For instance, he appointed two reporters (advisors) one of whom was charged with the responsibility of reminding him of kindly deeds on his program, and the other, about acts of revenge, both in writing. He ordered the first to prevent him from giving unjust decisions when he was angry and to invite him to a sense of justice and humanity.

The king likewise created courts of justice in the cities and appointed judges in the villages. He ordered the city folk to hold themselves superior to the peasants and ordered the latter to maintain deference toward their kinfolk of the cities as higher compatriots. And lastly he commanded the city folk to refrain from any exhibition of arrogance or contempt toward the peasants.

Under the Arsacids the Armenian state had attained a considerably advanced central administration. According to Faus-

⁸ Mommsen, V, p. 357.

tus of Byzantium the number of the government officialdom in the days of the last of the Arsacids reached one thousand, including of course the high dignitaries of the palace and exclusive of the local administration which was exercised largely by the feudal lords.

The capital of Armenia was Artaxata. After its destruction for the last time by the Roman general Priscus in the second century, the Armenian kings moved their residence to the City of Vagharshapat (Etchmiadzin) which remained the Armenian capital until the Arab domination.

Military Aspects

During this entire period, and even during those rare intervals when Roman supremacy over Armenia not only was nominal but real, the Armenian kingdom retained its private armies. We already have seen the importance the Romans attached to a strong Armenia, and how they even subsidized that army so that Armenia could play her role of buffer state not only against the Parthians but especially against the backward and warlike peoples of Transcaucasia and the barbarians of southern Russia.⁹

In those periods when Armenia found herself at war with Rome, the Armenian armies, aided by the Parthians, often distinguished themselves, especially in the battles of Rhandie and Elegia where the Roman legions sustained two of their greatest defeats.

Nevertheless, in the course of time, Armenia's wars against Rome became more and more difficult once the Romans slowly grasped the importance of transportation and communication as the key to operations in Armenia. The campaigns of Corbulo had demonstrated the enormous difficulties of provisioning armies. The successors of Nero launched a project of

large scale military road construction to link Armenia with the shores of the Aegean and Black seas. The great arteries of communication solved both the problem of transportation of armies (witness the easy transfer of the legions of Danube into Armenia) and the supplies. One historian has compared the road building of this period to the transcontinental great railroads of the 19th century. It was these roads which enabled Trajan, and later Marcus Aurelius, to concentrate large forces and supplies which enabled them to emerge victorious in their last wars with the Armenians and the Parthians. These wars were more swift and decisive.¹⁰

However, these wars against Rome were only one aspect of the military history of the times. There is the other side when Armenia was Rome's ally against the Parthians, when Rome was newly-emerging in the Middle East. Especially, it was Armenia as her constant ally, on whom Rome relied every time it was necessary to erect a barrier against the warlike peoples of the Transcaucasus or to march there to restore the order (witness the Roman intervention which ended in the occupation of a part of Iberia in the days of Emperor Vespasian).

And lastly, when the Sassanids replaced the Arsacids in Iran, Armenia retained her position and fought on the side of the Romans.

It should also be mentioned here that a large number of Armenians enlisted in the Roman Legion of the East as volunteers. The role of these volunteers steadily increased to such proportions that they gained the predominance in numbers and eventually became the shock troops of the Byzantine Empire.

Military service in the imperial army (at its height the Roman army boasted 200,-

⁹ Mommsen, Vol. V, p. 411.

¹⁰ Cumont, *The Frontier Provinces of the East*, Cambridge series, Vol. XI.

000 legionaires) was a priceless training school for the Armenians because the Roman army was based on obedience and discipline and not slavery, teaching the soldier dignity, pride, character building and valor.

Armenian units were found even in the legions on the Rhine frontier. According to Herodianus Emperor Maximianus, in his expedition against the Germans in 236, "had a large number of Armenian archers as friends or allies."¹¹ During the reign of Vespasian an Armenian contingent took part in the long Batavian war.¹²

Economic and Social Aspects

Beyond a doubt the frequently prevailing upheavals in Armenia during this period had an unfavorable effect on the economic life of the country. Notwithstanding this fact Armenia remained a prosperous country thanks to her geographical position which made her a natural link between west and east, as well as thanks to the enterprising spirit of her merchants who never recoiled against the most adventurous journeys.

Strabo mentions the role of Armenia as a country of transit¹³ and Mommsen¹⁴ tells us that the Armenians maintained permanent commercial ties not only with the west and its great marts (Cilicia and Cappadocia), but also with the Scythians of the Caucasus (the inhabitants of modern Russia), as well as with Central Asia and China via the Caspian Sea.

Furthermore, whenever Rome waged war against the Parthians Armenia's importance was enhanced by virtue of her position as a center of commercial inter-relationship between the Mediterranean, Central Asia and the far east—the only free highway when Armenia did not side with

the Parthians. And lastly, the sole fact that Armenia was close to the eastern provinces of the Roman empire—the richest provinces of the empire—was enough to redound to her benefit. "The western provinces of the Roman empire, headed even by Italy herself, could not equal the eastern part of the empire, either in population or riches."¹⁵

It is obvious, therefore, that even the present day Armenian merchants who, incidentally, represent the smallest trait of the Armenian character, are not wholly newcomers but they have behind them a tradition of centuries. Armenia played a leading role in the great currents of exchange whose heirs from other cities and lands (Venice, Genoa and the Hanseatic League) constitute a source of just national pride to this day.

These exchanges of goods between east and west, partly going through Armenia, consisted chiefly of silk, rice, spices, aromatics and precious stones which came from Central and southern Asia and even the far east. The Roman empire paid for its imports in money (silver and gold), and partly in manufactured goods—luxury articles which were easily transferable (Egyptian perfumes and jewelry, etc.)¹⁶

The entire eastern segment of the Roman empire became the natural clearing center of these exchanges and greatly profited from it. Armenia, too, had her share of the profit.

As to the products of Armenia, they were the same as those of Asia Minor. Armenia in reality was the economic extension of Asia Minor. She exported metals, the product of her mines, articles made of metal, woollens (Asia Minor was the center of wool industry for the Roman empire, as Syria and Egypt were the centers of the linen industry), rugs, wine, leather. It cannot be repeated too often that the Roman

¹¹ Sandaljian, Vol. II, p. 565.

¹² T. Aslan, *Les Auxiliaires arméniens*, Vannes, 1917, p. 21.

¹³ Strabo, *Geography*, XI, 5, 8.

¹⁴ Mommsen, V, p. 357

¹⁵ Ferrero, VI, p. 53.

¹⁶ Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, Oxford, 1927, p. 66.

empire received the material part of her civilization almost wholly from the East.

Speaking of Armenia, it was her rich mines of iron, copper, silver and gold which gave birth to a metallurgical industry whose fame spread to all parts of the world.¹⁷

Asia Minor also exported great quantities of grain which supplied the needs of Greece, but since the Roman armies in Armenia often had shortages of grain, it is not likely that Armenia in those times had any surplus of grains to export.

It should also be noted that the big highways in Asia Minor built by the successors of Nero whose great military importance we already have emphasized, were equally important from the economic standpoint. Through the Artaxata-Elegeia-Trebizond and Satala-Melitene highways Armenia was in constant communication with the Black Sea. Asia Minor and Cilicia. The exchanges between the West and the Far East were largely effected through Armenia from the north of Iran, the Caspian Sea and Turkestan. The empire's merchants regularly passed through Armenia to purchase Chinese silks at Tashkurkhan.

As to the structure of the population, Armenia did not possess the system of small farmers which for a long time constituted the strength of the Roman armies. The land belonged to the king, the nobility and the church, cultivated by the peasants who were subject to a sort of slavery. A greater degree of freedom was enjoyed only by the mountaineers who were shepherds, living a sort of semi-nomadic life.¹⁸

The peasantry constituted the larger part of the population of Armenia, the city dwellers being relatively small, even less, for instance, than in the coastal regions of the Black and Mediterranean seas.

The Ancient Religion of the Armenians

The religious conceptions of the Armenians at the time of their settlement in Armenia is obscure. According to Jacques de Morgan there are indications which lead us to believe that they started out with nature worship like many of their Aryan kinsmen.

Later, this primitive religion gave birth to a sort of national pantheism which embraced a large number of gods and goddesses some of whom were borrowed from Greek and Roman mythologies and others from Iran. In the front rank of these deities come Anahid, the goddess of fertility and wisdom, Asdghik, the goddess of love and beauty, and Vahagn, the god of valor.

Much later, under the influence of the Parthians, Aramazt (Ahuramazda) likewise gained entrance into the national pantheon, but this was no reason why the Armenians should turn into Mazdaists. Having lost his Iranian character, Ahuramazda simply became a sort of Zeus or Jupiter, crowning the Armenian Olympus.¹⁹ A detailed description of Armenian mythology is found in the works of Alishan, Gelzer and Sandalgian.²⁰

George Brandes has made the following characterization of Armenian mythology: "When Armenia adopted Christianity, not only the pagan temples were destroyed but, likewise, those epic poems which were dedicated to their gods and heroes. Only fragments of these works have come down to us revealing the lyric spirit of the Armenian people, and this is enough to reconstruct the entire Armenian pantheon. Armenian gods have neither the gigantic proportions of Asiatic gods nor the grace of

¹⁸ Rostovtzeff, p. 239.

¹⁹ Jacques de Morgan, *Histoire du Peuple arménien*, Paris, 1919, p. 53.

²⁰ Alishan, *La Vieille Religion des Arméniens*; H. Gelzer, *Zur Armenischen Gotteslehre*, Dresden, 1896; Sandalgian, *Histoire documentaire de l'Arménie*, Rome, 1917, II. See also Kevork Alishan, chapter III, p. 3.

¹⁷ F. Macler, *Quatre Conférences sur l'Arménie*, Paris, 1932, p. 54.

the Greek gods. They were very much like the people which created them—industrious, reasonable and good.²¹

The main shrine of the Armenians was found in Ashtishat (Acesilene) in the region of Taron (Moush). There in the forest rose a number of temples the most famous of which was the one dedicated to Anahid. The golden statue of Anahid, the patron goddess of Armenia, was located in the spacious hall of this temple. The Romans relate that when Mark Anthony's army occupied Armenia, the first soldier who laid hands on the statue was instantly blinded.²² These temples were surrounded by immense parks in which sacred animals roamed — the deer with golden collars which "Lucullus saw and admired."

The great Armenian writer Raffi in his famous historical novel Samuel has given the following vivid description of the solemn festival which was held around this shrine on the occasion of the Armenian new year which began on August 24.

"It was here, on the plains of Hashti, where the Festival of the New Year was held in the month of Navasard. The national celebration was signalized by the appearance of the Armenian King, the Armenian High Priest, and the ministers and the princes. The King himself initiated the sacrificial ceremony by offering one hundred bulls with gilded horns for the appeasement of the gods. His example was followed by all the dignitaries of the kingdom.

"The new year was the signal for the beginning of a new life. On this festive occasion Armenia was bound to show her gods the fruits of the progress made during the year. Vahagn demanded bravery, Anahid, the arts, and Asdghik, love and poetry.

There were contests in bravery, ingenuity

and skill. The poet sang the songs which product of his skill. There were jousts and tournaments, duels between brave men, or the gladiator against the mad bull or some wild animal. There were horse races, or footmen who competed with fleet rein-deers. The victor was rewarded with one of those rose wreaths which adorned the temple of Asdghik. This was the reason why this particular fair was called *Vardavar*, meaning, the Festival of the Roses.

"The new year also marked the passing of the old year. Old sins had to be atoned for, and the people entered the new life wholly cleansed. Every one had to be baptized anew. The Great High Priest took he had composed, the musician played on his instrument, the wrestler regaled his powerful muscles and the craftsman, the the holy water from the waves of the Aradzani and sprinkled the entire multitude. At this juncture the sky was filled with millions of white doves, each pilgrim having released his own dove. And these sacred birds of the Goddess of Love, so spotless and immaculate, soared, glided over and fluttered around the white marble temple.

"The sacrifice, the water and the dove symbolized the holy mystery of reconciliation, atonement and love. On each new year, in the Month of Navasard, the Festival of Vardavar was held on the Plain of Hashti, on the heights of Gargeh. On each new year Armenia made her peace and atonement with the sprinkling of the holy water of Aradzani. Each new year Armenia celebrated the holy mystery of love with the dedication of doves to the Temple of Asdghik."²³

These pagan temples were owners of great riches and lands, each with retinues of countless priests and servants. The Shrine of Ashtishat numbered them in the thousands.

Such was the religion of the Armenians

²¹ G. Brandes, *L'Armenie et l'Europe*, Geneva, 1903, p. 17.

²² Ferrero, VI, p. 16.

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until their adoption of Christianity in the latter part of the 3rd century. Neither the Romans nor the Parthians made the Armenian religion the object of persecution. The extraordinary tolerance of the Romans toward religion is well known, something which, it must be admitted, is a fundamental condition in the creation of any great empire. "Rome," writes Renan, "upheld the former worship striking out of it only those elements which were inhuman, seditious or offensive to others."²³

We meet the same kind of tolerance on the part of the Parthians who never tried to force their Iranian Mazdeism on the Armenians.

Armenia, Her Position and Policy

At the conclusion of this chapter we wish to make a general survey of a history of two and a half centuries in which Armenia, caught between the Romans and the Parthians, succeeded in preserving her independence, or at least her autonomy, in a period when almost the whole of the known world was included in the Roman Empire.

As Chapot has observed, "despite the majority of neighboring countries, Armenia was inhabited by a race of warriors. It was not her weakness, therefore, that made her the battle ground of conflicting powers, but her position."²⁵

A natural fortress in those days as in our days, Armenia in reality dominated the Middle East. In the hands of Rome she was a permanent threat to Mesopotamia which was the richest part of the Parthian empire. Moreover, she enabled Rome to hit the Parthians directly in the center of their empire through Median Atropatene (Azerbaijan, the region of modern Tabriz).

On the other hand, in the hands of the

Parthians, Armenia inevitably meant their superiority in Transcaucasia and a direct access to the Black Sea, namely, the mastery of the base of one of the greatest commercial arteries linking Europe with Central Asia.²⁶ At the same time she was a direct threat to Asia Minor, Cilicia and Syria, the richest provinces of the Roman empire. As Ferraro has observed, Armenia really was the center of gravity in the East from the standpoint of the wealth and importance of the eastern provinces. It was not until the gradual economic rise of Gaul under Roman supremacy that this situation was balanced.

Neither one nor the other of the two contending powers, therefore, could tolerate the simple annexation of Armenia to either.

What other solution could be adopted? To create a wholly independent great Armenia, a great state which would separate Rome from Parthia? As Rostovtzeff has observed, this was unacceptable both for the Romans and the Parthians because neither of them had forgotten the mighty empire which Tigranes the Great created.

The partition between Rome and the Parthians, as Chapot observes, "was a solution which fitted Mesopotamia which, being a vast plain inhabited by manifold and malleable peoples, was not suited for independence, but it hardly applied to Armenia which was a mountainous mass of unity, inhabited by a distinct and warlike race which rebelled against any attempt at assimilation, centralized, and sort of wrapped up in itself."

There remained only one solution—the territorial integrity of Armenia as an independent state under the sovereignty of one or the other of the neighboring great empires. This was the solution which Rome and the Parthians accepted but could not

²³ Raffi, *Samuel*, Edition of Altian and Kibarian, Paris, 1924, pp. 80-81.

²⁴ Renan, *Histoire des Origines du Christianisme*, Vol. II, *The Apostles*, Paris, 1866, pp. 234-235.

²⁵ Chapot, p. 380.

²⁶ M. Rostovtzeff, *The Parthians*, Cambridge Ancient History, Vol. X, p. 91.

come to an agreement on the mode of its application, thus making Armenia a cause of perpetual wars.

The Parthians desired a wholly independent Armenia with her natural boundaries. Their only ambition was, as much as possible, to see on the Armenian throne a prince of their royal family, namely an Arsacid.

Rome, on the contrary, wanted an autonomous Armenia but under Roman sovereignty. She did not care much who was the king of Armenia as long as he was loyal to the Emperor, rendered him homage, and received from him either the gift or the confirmation of his crown.

As to the Armenians, their attitude may be summed up as follows. In the initial stages when the memory of their wars against the Parthians was still fresh and they regarded the latter as their greatest danger, they favored the Romans.

But later, a sizeable segment of the Armenian nobility which represented the national party turned to the Parthians. On the other hand, the stupid policy of Mark Anthony and Cleopatra opened such a gap between Armenia and Rome which was impossible to bridge for a long time. This new about face against Roman pretensions to reduce Armenia into a tributary state was so natural that the Parthians adopted a very mild policy, their only conditions being the preservation of an independent Armenia which would be free of all foreign influence. Being weaker than Rome, their pretensions on Armenia were much less, and this was enough to tip the scales in their favor.

Unable to adopt a hostile attitude toward Rome in a world where her supremacy was common law, Tacitus says this about the Armenians: "A people which knew not what liberty is but which turned to the Parthians to demand of them a master." Yet in his same annals Tacitus has

justified, perhaps involuntarily, the attitude of the Armenians in following words dedicated to King Artaxias II who was the first Armenian king to side with the Parthians, "An enemy of the Romans because he always remembered the murder of his father, he defended his kingdom against the Romans with the aid of the Arsacids."

Rome and Armenia

And now it is up to us to examine the policy which Rome pursued toward Armenia, as well as the inter-relations of the two peoples. "The history of Rome," says Ferrero, "is the history of a great effort to govern a vast empire. It is as important to study her failures as her successes." At the beginning of our era Rome is master of the world. In the course of two centuries she has succeeded in extending her supremacy both "over the decadent civilization of the east and the still amorphous barbarism of the west."

But now that she has planted her foot on Asia, she is confronted with a great question. How far shall she go? Where will be the end of this rational ambition and where does reckless adventurism begin?

Thus, Armenia presented one of the most important problems of Roman policy. On the other hand, she could not remain indifferent to this formidable citadel, this natural fortress which, by virtue of her position and physical structure, enabled her to dominate or to menace all her eastern possessions. On the other hand, the simple annexation of Armenia to the empire not only was difficult but also undesirable. For a long time annexation was difficult because to do so it was necessary finally and definitely to vanquish the Parthians. Yet even in those periods when the Parthians were held in jeopardy before the Roman might (in the days of Augustus and then Marcus Aurelius, for instance), we see that Rome again declined annexation and was satisfied with an autonomous

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Armenia which was her ally and subject to her supremacy.

This policy encountered many difficulties, first on the part of the Armenians because a strong nationalist party, relying on the Parthians, fought against Rome for long years, as well as those kings which sided with Rome. Rome had many unpleasant experiences with the Armenians which provoked Tacitus' severe language about the Armenians.

When Rome placed on the Armenian throne an Armenian or an oriental prince who had been brought up in Rome, the latter was a total stranger to the psychology of the people, too uninformed to find a common language with the native nobility. When a native prince was elected, even if a friend of Rome, even he could not oppose the nationalist party and the pro-Parthian nobility which constituted the majority. It was through a combination of rare qualities that such a prince, through the aid of Rome, succeeded in imposing himself and remain on the throne.²⁷

What are the reasons which impelled Rome to tolerate a similar situation, not to annex Armenia to the empire, an annexation which Strabo foresaw when he wrote, "As to the Armenians, they need a Roman governor. This alone can restrain them."²⁸

In the list of these reasons mention should be made of the fact that, of all the countries which fell within the Roman sphere, Armenia was the farthest removed. A simple glance at the map will show that Armenia was farther from Rome than any other region of the empire. The means of transportation and communication of the times made Rome's task very difficult, to govern such a remote country.

Account should be taken also of the war-

like population of Armenia and her belligerent nobility which, entrenched in their mountain recesses, could force Rome to maintain many garrisons should she attempt to annex Armenia to the empire.

And lastly, there were the political and strategic considerations. There was no hope of utilizing an allied Armenia against the Parthians because Rome gradually came to realize this was an impossibility in view of the nationalist party's proven sympathy toward the Parthians. Yet Rome was even more concerned over the role of Armenia as a buffer state against the restless tribes of the Transcaucasus, as well as the barbarian Scythians.

The Roman policy, established by Pompey, endangered by Mark Anthony and sanctified by Augustus and his successors with the exception of Trajan, strove to preserve an autonomous Armenia under Roman supremacy. It rejected the solution by annexation because Rome needed a buffer state in the East and the North-east. To annex Armenia would have meant forcibly to interfere with the affairs of the Transcaucasian peoples and then to come in contact with the barbarians of the north. This would have meant the creation of a second Germany in Rome's side. Whatever the disappointments which Armenia caused to Rome in her struggle with the Parthians, she never disappointed her as a citadel in the direction of the Caucasus.

Later, during the terrible wars between the empire and the Sassanids, Armenia's alliance became vital to Rome. As Ferrero observes, "The situation of the Roman empire in the east had become critical since the days of Emperor Valerian, that is, from the time when Rome lost her main fortress of Armenia in her struggle with the new Sassanian dynasty."²⁹

In the company of Rome, Armenia found herself associated with the greatest ad-

²⁷ J. Anderson, "The Eastern Frontier under Augustus," *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Vol. X, p. 91.

ministrative genius the world has ever known. Law and peace, these were Rome's fundamental aims as they should be of every government which is worthy of the name. Rome tried to insure the peace through her institutions and her political system, an important element of which was Armenia. As to law and order, Rome established it through her institutions, her legislations, and through her constant struggle against excessive wealth and excessive poverty.

Armenia's debt to Rome is no less than Rome's debt to Armenia. Without Rome, without the counterbalance of Rome's might, Armenia undoubtedly would have been absorbed by the Parthians.

Besides, Rome's influence had a civilizing effect on Armenia by bringing her closer to Europe with which she already

was linked through the origin of her people. This contact with Rome also was a factor in resuming Armenia's tie with ancient Greece, for, if Roman civilization owed her laws and mores to Rome and Italy, it was Greece which imported to her a large share of her art and intellectual stimulus.

Undoubtedly Armenia did not bear the stamp of Roman influence as much, for example, as Gaul. Yet, through her kings princes and nobles who had been brought up in Rome or who had been in contact with Rome's representatives in the East, Rome did exert a permanent influence on Armenia. It goes without saying, as Paul Valery has written: "Wherever the Roman empire has ruled, wherever her power has been felt, or even where the empire has inspired fear, admiration or envy, something European lingers there."

(To be continued)

²⁸ G. Ferrero, *La Ruine de la Civilisation antique*, Paris, 1921, p. 107.

● PART II:

THE LAST OF THE MOHIGIANS

OR THE LAST OF THE ARMENIANS

(Copyright 1958 by Nishan Parlakian)

NISHAN PARLAKIAN

ACT II

FADE IN:

(On same scene.)

ARMEN

Is that drink for me?

SHAKEH

Yes.

(Shakeh hands Armen her drink.)

ARMEN

I cannot drink with the gentleman unless
you introduce me.

SHAKEH

This is Mr. Russell. Mr. Russell, my husband.

BILL

Pleased to meet you, Mr. Mohigian.

(He is about to come over to shake
when Armen raises his glass toast fashion
and stops Bill's approach. Bill lifts his
glass, too.)

ARMEN

To your health.

(They drink.)

SHAKEH

Didn't you go to the club?

ARMEN

I forgot to take enough money. I thought
it might be wise to lose some to Basmajian
in backgammon.

SHAKEH

Will you be going right away?

ARMEN

Oh, I have a little time. If you had said

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nard Bernstein, 11 West 42nd Street, New York
36, N. Y.

you were having a guest I could have
gone an hour later.

SHAKEH

Well, I . . .

BILL

I kind of dropped in unexpectedly.

(Shakeh is relieved and thankful to Bill
for his rescue.)

ARMEN

I see.

(There is a moment of silence. Shaken
and Bill begin to speak together inadver-
tently.)

SHAKEH

Mr. Russell is a friend. . . .

BILL

You see, I'm a . . .

(They both stop, embarrassed.)

SHAKEH

Mr. Russell is a friend of Aznive's.

ARMEN

Oh? You work in her company or something?

BILL

No.

SHAKEH

Mr. Russell is a friend, Armen. They have gone out together.

ARMEN

You are a boy friend, Mr. Russell?

BILL

Yes, Mr. Mohigian.

ARMEN

Mr. Russell, I must speak to you.

Mr. Russell I want you to understand . . .

BILL

I know . . . I'm an outsider.

ARMEN

Then you know. Mr. Russell, I can be a gentleman toward you as long as nothing is involved.

BILL

That's why I'm here, Mr. Mohigian.

ARMEN

Oh is that it? I see. And that's why you have come when I'm not in to speak to my wife. You thought it would be easier that way. Well, did she give you your answer?

(There is silence.)

SHAKEH

I gave him an answer. But we know there are no other prospects for our daughter.

ARMEN

Oh? Is that what you told Mr. Russell? Well, Mr. Russell, my wife is forgetful. I was about my daughter's business even when I left.

BILL

I don't know what you're talking about Mr. Mohigian. I just came to tell you that I am very much in love with your daughter.

ARMEN

You didn't come to tell me that, Mr. Russell. You knew I wasn't here so you came to convince my wife. You thought she could influence me. You were wrong.

BILL

Will you let me explain . . .

ARMEN

There is no explanation necessary. My daughter is not interested in you.

BILL

Will you listen. Don't just close your ears. She is very much interested in me!

ARMEN

I tell you she is not interested in you.

BILL

Because you say it, it's got to be true? Well you're wrong! And you've got to learn to take it.

ARMEN

Mr. Russell you are insulting me in my house! You will leave!

BILL

I won't leave until you hear me out!

SHAKEH

Please, Armen, let's stop all this now before it goes too far.

ARMEN

Stay out of this woman; Your graciousness, your sarma and raki have made Mr. Russell bold and impudent.

BILL

Her graciousness has nothing to do with this. Your wife and daughter may be frightened of you, but I'm not. I've wanted to speak to you for a long time. I would have if it weren't for Aznive trying to protect you.

ARMEN

Protect me! Mr. Russell get out of my house before I am forced to take you out bodily!

BILL

You're going to hear me out if I have to sit on you!

ARMEN

There is nothing to hear!! You are an outsider!! There is no room in our lives for you!! My daughter is engaged! Do you hear?! She is engaged and tonight we are having a dinner to celebrate the engagement!

BILL

You're lying! She would have told me! *(He grabs Armen's collar.)*

You're lying!! Tell me you're lying!!! *(The door opens and closes with a slam.)*

CUT TO:

(The terrified face of Aznive.)

AZNIVE

Bill!

CUT TO:

(Close up of Bill still holding Armen's collar with Aznive in the distance approaching.)

AZNIVE

Bill what are you doing?

(Bill releases Armen.)

AZNIVE

What is this? What's going on?!!

SHAKEH

Go to your room!

AZNIVE

Poppa, Momma, Bill what's happened?!!

ARMEN

Go to your room your mother said! Go!

AZNIVE

I won't go until you tell me what this is all about!

ARMEN

Are you deaf, girl! You have shamed me! I have told you go to your room!! Now go!!!

(Aznive's face bears a tortured expression. She is on the verge of crying. Her lips work convulsively. She is silenced by the patriarch whose word has always been law in this household. She begins to cry. She turns toward the steps.)

BILL

Aznive!!!!

(Aznive turns.)

BILL

Aznive, it isn't true!!! You said our date was off tonight. Why? Aznive tell me why? I don't care about being hurt. Just let me hear it from you.

(Aznive is crying. Perplexed she tries to speak.)

ARMEN

I forbid you to speak! I said go up!! I am the law in this house. I have spoken, Mr. Russell. My daughter is engaged to another man. You are shaming us with your presence. Now leave and never come back. Never try to see my daughter again!!

PAN TO:

(Bill walking to the door in utter dejection.)

PAN TO:

(Aznive on the stairway looking after Bill in tears. The door is heard slamming.)

OVER:

(Aznive closes her eyes.)

ARMEN (OVER)

Set six places for dinner.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

(On one end of the living room where there is a table set for dinner. It is the evening of the same day. Armen and Shakeh await the coming of their guests.)

SHAKEH

How much did you lose to Basmajian?

ARMEN

Nothing, nothing. A small amount. Why talk about it. He was in a good mood and that's all that counts. Where is Aznive?

SHAKEH

We prepared everything and she went upstairs to change. I told her to wear something nice.

ARMEN

Not obvious though. I don't want them to think we are pushing our daughter off.

There is pride, you know.

SHAKEH

Her taste is my taste, Armen. She will not be obvious. I must look to the kitchen.

(She goes to the kitchen. Armen adjusts a glass on the table and the doorbell rings.)

ARMEN *(Calling)*

They are here. They are here. Shakeh come, come quick.

(He runs to the door and opens it.)

Come in, come in cousin Vartan. Step in Anoush. And this must be our new arrival Nishan Aslanian.

(Mrs. Anoush Basmajian, fifty, small and furtive: Mr. Nishan Aslanian, presumably a marriageable young man but in fact forty; and Mr. Vartan Basmajian about Armen's age step in in that order. Shakeh has come in from the kitchen. Shakeh kisses Anoush.)

VARTAN

You are right brother Armen this is Nishan Aslanian our young man from the old country.

NISHAN

How are you Mr. Mohigian.

ARMEN

No, no. Call me Armen and I will call you Nishan. After all you are a distant cousin to my wife. Shakeh, greet your cousin as befits his new arrival. He is only in this country two weeks.

SHAKEH

How are you cousin Nishan.

NISHAN

Well and you cousin.

(They shake warmly.)

SHAKEH

Are your parents well?

NISHAN

Yes. They may come to America in a few more years.

(Anoush and Armen have been shaking while Shakeh and Nishan talk.)

VARTAN

Well, brother where is she? Where is Aznive?

ARMEN

Ah ha yes, where is she?

(Armen turns his head and looks towards the stairs.)

There she is. There she is my dark eyed, eligible daughter.

CUT TO:

(Aznive momentarily poised on the stairs in a lovely simple dress.)

CUT TO:

(The group. Aznive enters the circle.)

ARMEN

Come here, Aznive. Let me introduce you.

(Aznive shakes hands with everyone as Armen calls out each name.)

ARMEN

Mrs. Basmajian. Mr. Basmajian. And this young eligible man is Nishan Aslanian.

(Aznive bows to each a little.)

AZNIVE

May I have your coats and hats.

(The guests take off whatever outer garments they have and hand them to Aznive along with hats, etc. Loaded down with all this clothing Aznive disappears off camera to put them in a closet.)

VARTAN

What a well mannered girl you have brother Armen.

ARMEN

Thank you, brother Vartan.

VARTAN

What do you think, Nishan? Well mannered wasn't she?

NISHAN

She didn't seem to smile at me.

VARTAN

Nervousness, that is all cousin.

(Anoush and Shakeh are preoccupied with some women's talk. The three men are together near the side board.)

ARMEN

Gentlemen, a drink of raki before we eat.

VARTAN

Excellent.

(Armen pours three drinks and gives the other two men theirs.)

VARTAN

Look, look Nishan. See how she is tending to the table.

CUT TO:

(Aznive arranging the table with a saturnine expression.)

CUT TO:

(The three men.)

NISHAN

She seems not to have any joy in her work.

ARMEN

Don't say that cousin Nishan. She loves house work. Half the time her hands are in water and the other half the time her hands are on clothes, sewing, mending, crocheting.

VARTAN

Certainly, certainly she is a good home girl. Let's drink to it.

(They raise their glasses and drink. Nishan begins to cough from the potency of the drink.)

ARMEN

Your stomach is too soft cousin Nishan, Let's train it with another drink.

NISHAN

I've had plenty of raki in my time, but I think this was too bitter.

ARMEN

Bitter. What do you say Vartan, was it bitter?

VARTAN

Not for me.

ARMEN

Another one for us the hardy ones.

(Armen pours another drink.)

CUT TO:

(Close up of Nishan's disdainful face.)

CUT TO:

(Shakeh and Anoush.)

ANOUSH

She is a lovely girl. Too bad she was too young for my boy ten years ago.

SHAKEH

That's luck, Anoush.

(To Aznive off Camera.)

What is it Aznive?

PAN TO:

(Include Aznive who has approached the women.)

AZNIVE

We can sit down now, Momma.

SHAKEH

Good.

(To the men.)

Armen bring everyone to the table.

CUT TO:

(The men. Armen, with palms up, proffers the dining area to the men.)

ARMEN

Gentlemen, let us eat. My daughter cooked most of the food in honor of our friend Nishan.

VARTAN

I'm dying to taste it.

CUT TO:

(Anoush and Shakeh sitting at the table with Aznive assisting them. The men enter, Armen goes to his chair and indicates to the others where they are to sit. Aznive assists the men to their seats and then goes to her place.)

ARMEN

Everybody try the sarma as appetizer.

(The sarma is passed around as Armen continues talking.)

ARMEN

I think both mother and daughter made this. They are both excellent at it. Notice if you will the delicateness of the grape leaves. They went to the country last year and picked them themselves. They brought them home and pickled them.

(Armen tastes his sarma)

Ah delicious.

VARTAN

It is excellent.

CUT TO:

(Shakeh's face alarmed.)

SHAKEH

What is the matter cousin Nishan?

CUT TO:*(Nishan's face contorted because of ill tasting food in his mouth. He puts a napkin to his mouth.)***CUT TO:***(Armen and Nishan)*

ARMEN

Don't you like the sarma?

NISHAN

I bit into a lemon seed.

ARMEN

What is a lemon seed between friends? Everyone leaves one in sarma every now and then by accident.

NISHAN

That depends on the training of the person. My mother never, not once, in all the time I was with her left a lemon seed in her sarma.

CUT TO:*(Vartan and Aznive with a roast chicken on a platter. She is placing it on the table.)*

VARTAN

Here is the chicken and I am sure it is excellent.

CUT TO:*(Close up of chicken.)*

SHAKEH (OVER)

Aznive, hurry get the pilaf before it gets cold.

ARMEN

You have not tasted pilaf until you taste what Aznive my daughter can do to rice and noodles.

DISSOLVE TO:*(Close up of the skeleton of the chicken a half hour later.)*

VARTAN (OVER)

Everything was wonderful. Oh I am full.

CUT TO:*(The total scene. The plates are empty except for a morsel of food here and there.)*

ARMEN

I have to admit you're right even though

it sounds like I am talking big about my own. Now Nishan my son what did you think?

NISHAN

It was all right.

ARMEN

Well, I notice that you don't talk too loud about things anyway so I will take what you said as a compliment. Now I ask you, what do you think of a lovely daughter such as mine who can also cook like an older woman?

NISHAN

Oh all right, I think.

ARMEN

All right you think. You can't complain about the whole meal just for a lemon seed.

NISHAN

Brother Armen. I see by tonight that our tastes are a little different.

ARMEN

What fault could you find in this meal?

NISHAN

The chicken was all right. But a chicken is a chicken you roast and you cannot spoil it. But the pilaf. Wouldn't you say the rice was a little soggy?

ARMEN

Soggy. They steam the rice. How could it be too soggy?

ANOUSH

Sometimes when you put too much water in the pot it doesn't boil away and the rice becomes soggy.

ARMEN

Oh ho. You are counting a thimble of water here or there.

VARTAN

Now, now don't say that Armen, brother. My wife is an excellent cook and she knows about these things.

ARMEN

Are you trying to say that the pilaf was too soggy?

VARTAN

Now that the subject has been brought up I would say that it was may be a very little bit too soggy.

ARMEN

Oh ho you are making my head turn. You have brought a very particular man to my house brother Vartan and now I see that he has influenced you.

NISHAN

I am particular because where I come from we do things excellently.

ARMEN

I would say that from where you come they have no manners. You come to a man's house drink his drink and eat his food and then you make silly faces and say silly things. Is that gratitude?

NISHAN

I did not ask to come to your house. You asked my cousin Vartan to bring me so that I could look at your daughter.

ARMEN

And is that so wrong of me to even let you look at a darling like mine.

AZNIVE

Poppa, stop it.

SHAKEH

Armen stop this do you hear? You are embarrassing Aznive.

ARMEN

Let her go upstairs then.

(Aznive exits running.)

VARTAN

Enough of this Armen.

SHAKEH

Let us have our coffee now.

ARMEN

No, no coffee. It might be too bitter or too sweet for our refined countryman. I want to know from him what wrong I have done letting him look at my darling daughter?

NISHAN

I don't have to answer that. My position in life is secure. I have the pick of the

Armenian girls in the community.

ARMEN

Oh and is that so. Who would have you? Tell me who would have you? You must think we are blind and cannot see that you are at least forty years old. Why my wife is your age and we are giving a daughter to you? Never.

VARTAN

Stop this Armen. You are insulting our cousin!

ARMEN

He cannot be insulted; he is perfect.

VARTAN

Is this the respect you hold for me for bringing him to your house?

ARMEN

You should have warned me he was an ass and I would not have asked you to bring him. He couldn't have my daughter if he were the last Armenian.

NISHAN

I have had enough of this insulting. I want to leave, Vartan.

ARMEN

Leave, leave and never come back. I don't want to see your old face again.

(Nishan has risen, and crossed to the living room area. The remaining two women go after him.)

VARTAN

Brother, is this the way things were to happen?

ARMEN

Our relative is too particular a man for me, but he does not see where he comes short.

VARTAN

There is nothing wrong with the man. All right say he is thirty-nine, but he is a catch for any Armenian girl. Armen be wise and apologize.

ARMEN

Never! Take him away! I don't want to see him.

VARTAN

These things have a way of spreading through the community!

ARMEN

You cannot threaten me! What's right is right!!

VARTAN

You are twisting my words I am not threatening you!! But all right if you want to end it at that we will go.

CUT TO:

(The two women and Nishan. Anoush has her coat on. Shakeh is helping Nishan on with his. Vartan enters, takes his coat from a chair and puts it on.)

I cannot make my brother see sense.

SHAKEH

He became excited. Take no offense. You will come again.

(Vartan looks to Nishan who looks aloof.)

VARTAN

I do not know, Shakeh. That is up to Armen. Well, we must go.

(Vartan and Nishan exit. Shakeh has walked them and Anoush to the door. Anoush lingers a moment.)

ANOUSH

You know this type of news has a way of spreading, Shakeh.

SHAKEH

Oh don't say that Anoush. Please not a word or there will be shame on our family.

ANOUSH

I wouldn't say anything to anyone, Shakeh. You know me.

SHAKEH

Forgive us, please.

(ARMEN (OVER))

Stop apologizing. It is their fault too for bringing such an ignoramus of a person.

ANOUSH

Well I must go.

(Anoush exits. Pained as she closes the door, Shakeh is almost in tears.)

CUT TO:

(Armen at the side board having a drink of raki. He senses his wife is near him.)

PAN TO:

(Include Shakeh)

SHAKEH

You have your raki for your consolation. What have I?

ARMEN

What consolation? What are you talking about?

SHAKEH

You don't know. If our daughter had any chance for a decent marriage it went out that door.

ARMEN

That was no decent marriage.

SHAKEH

Haven't we said it a thousand times. Let it be an Armenian boy and that is all we want?

ARMEN

Never mind. Never mind. Am I giving him my daughter and he isn't pleased? Did you hear him? We are from a village. We are peasants to him.

SHAKEH

Armen he is an Armenian and there are no other such boys asking for our daughter. Our boys are marrying outsiders and there is an unbalance in boys and girls. Our daughter loves an outsider, but she would have married this man for us without love and now your pride stands in her way.

ARMEN

There is a right and wrong pride. Mine is right.

SHAKEH

Aznive is giving up so much can't you give up your pride?

ARMEN

Never. Enough of you woman.

SHAKEH

Not enough, no. You're giving our daughter no chance. She is our flesh and blood. Where is your kindness. Let her

have this Armenian before it is too late.

ARMEN

Never too late for our beauty. If there is one young Armenian boy left, the power of her beauty will draw him to our door.

SHAKEH

You heard the Basmajians. Our reputation in the community is nothing now. It doesn't take long for mouths to talk. They will say impudent parents can only have impudent children. We are a close people. You know what the tongues will do.

ARMEN

All right. All right. Stop plaguing me. What do you want? What do you want of my life?

SHAKEH

Call the Basmajians. Tell them you lost your head. Tell them you're sorry. Tell them to come again with our cousin Nishan and you will apologize in everyone's presence.

ARMEN

Woman I apologize? Me? They should apologize to me.

SHAKEH

Either apologize or let the outsider boy have our girl. It is different for a woman not to be married.

(Pointing to phone)

Call Armen.

ARMEN

We will see, Shakeh.

(Suddenly the phone rings and both Armen and Shakeh are startled.)

ARMEN

There there. They are calling me. After all cousin Nishan wasn't that young and we have a beauty.

(The phone rings again and Armen picks it up majestically.)

Hello. Oh.

(He covers the mouthpiece)

It is that Mr. Russell asking for Aznive. *(Back into the receiver)*

I'm afraid she cannot speak to you

(Pause). I will not be threatened Mr. Russell. If you step into my house you will be thrown out. *(Pause)* That is all

(He hangs up abruptly. His face is pained for he is trying to decide whether or not to call to apologize.)

Leave me now, Shakeh. Leave me alone.

(Shakeh leaves the room. Armen reaches for the phone withdraws his hand and then takes up the phone again. He dials.)

ARMEN

Hello. Brother Vartan. It's me Armen. Did you just get in? *(Pause)* Good. I thought I might have found you in bed. *(Pause)* Listen brother I have called to say I think what you advised me was wise. *(Pause)* Yes, that. I am ready to apologize. *(Pause)* Oh it is not so big of me. All I want is a good marriage for my daughter. *(Pause)* Would it be asking too much to ask you to come tomorrow at the same time? I'm sure you can convince cousin Nishan. *(Pause)* Good, good. We will see you then. Good bye.

(Armen hangs up and calls)

Shakeh!!!

(SHAKEH (Over)

Yes, Armen.

ARMEN

I have called. I have apologized.

(There are tears in his eyes.)

FADE OUT:

END ACT II

●
ACT III

FADE IN:

(In the living room the next morning, Sunday.)

SHAKEH

But it's all right again.

AZNIVE

I don't care Momma.

SHAKEH

Don't say that. Don't.

AZNIVE

But I don't care!!

SHAKEH

Quiet girl, quiet. Your father is up and dressing. Let us get breakfast ready or we will be late for church.

AZNIVE

Momma I can't go. I can't go with you knowing how we all feel about each other.

SHAKEH

Every week we have gone together. We must all go today. The Basmajians will be there. Your father apologized to them. There will be no rumors, no scandal now unless we are not all together.

AZNIVE

Let there be rumors and scandal. What's that to me?

SHAKEH

It is something to us.

AZNIVE

I'm sorry but I'm sick of it. Momma I told you. I pleaded with you. I love Bill. And rumors and scandals or not I'm going to him. And we're going to run away.

SHAKEH

Then run away!! Go. Now. Go, before your father comes down.

(Aznive doesn't move. She is shocked and frightened.)

SHAKEH

No you can't. You are us and we are you. The rudder has been placed in you and set in one course since you were a baby. Go! No you cannot go because your life is cast like an iron thing. And that means you cannot go without our approval, without our blessing. Oh you could go and you might be happy but the eye of your soul would look back and yearn. Because each of our souls has two parts. One part is our own. One part belongs to our people.

(Aznive is crying.)

SHAKEH

Aznive don't cry.

AZNIVE

(Convulsing)

Momma, I'm unhappy. Momma if every feeling of love inside of me is so unimportant why is the flesh tearing tearing inside of me. Momma, don't make me marry a man I don't love. Momma don't make me disobey you. Momma please, please help me.

SHAKEH

Aznive, no more of this. Aznive all these wounds heal with time. Now no more.

AZNIVE

Momma help me. Momma all the wounds will heal like you say no matter what I do. But there will always be a sadness in me. Momma make me love this man.

SHAKEH

I cannot do that.

AZNIVE

Then Momma give me your blessing for the one I love. Momma I'm crying and in me there's a tearing like when a big tree falls hit by lightning. There may be life left. But only half a life. Momma give me your blessing and let me go.

(Both women grasp each other. Both are crying.)

SHAKEH

I give you my blessing and you may go. Aznive I give you my blessing and yet you will not go. There is your father and there is no blessing from him. And you will not go.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

(On the living room. It is now evening and after dinner. Mrs. Anoush Basmajian, Mr. Vartan Basmajian, the eligible Nishan Aslanian, Mr. and Mrs. Mohigian are seated. Aznive, standing, goes from one to the other serving demi-tasse cups of Turkish coffee and Turkish delights which in Armenian are known as lokhume.)

AZNIVE

(Offering coffee and lokhume)
Mr. Aslanian?

NISHAN

(Taking coffee and lokhume)

Well thank you, thank you, Miss Mohigian.

AZNIVE

You're welcome.

NISHAN

I have to say the truth Miss Mohigian. The shish-kebab tonight was excellent.

ARMEN

Cousin Nishan, that is good of you to say, but we should not turn my daughter's head with undue compliments. You probably noticed that the spicing from the marination was not enough, but you do not mention it because you are a gentleman.

VARTAN

No brother Armen, everything was perfect. If things are perfect why should we say they aren't?

ANOUSH

No reason at all.

NISHAN

And Miss Mohigian, this coffee is done to perfection.

AZNIVE

Thank you cousin Nishan. Enjoy it.

VARTAN

What is this with you cousin Nishan? The girl has a first name. You are not unfamiliar with each other.

NISHAN

I ask cousin Armen's permission.

ARMEN

Go right ahead, cousin. You do her honor to use her first name. But I assure you she does not deserve what it implies.

NISHAN

Cousin Armen you do Aznive an injustice.

ARMEN

You do not know my daughter's ingratitude. Like all fathers I have closed my eyes on her wrong doings and all has been good with her. Suddenly I am awakened.

NISHAN

What wrong doings are you speaking of?

SHAKEH

Don't listen to him cousin Nishan. My husband exaggerates a small thing.

ANOUSH

What small thing is it this time?

SHAKEH

(Avoiding the issue)

If he has indigestion, he suddenly imagines the cooking is bad.

ARMEN

All right have it your way. Aznive, daughter will you make us another pot of coffee.

(Aznive exits)

VARTAN

Well what do you think cousin Nishan?

NISHAN

(A little hesitant)

I think she is a fine girl.

ARMEN

I see you hesitate a little. Whatever she lacks, cousin, I can make up to you in other ways.

NISHAN

I appreciate what you say but my aim is not only the size of her dowry. Perhaps I should say no more and there will be no ill will.

ARMEN

Please say anything. I ask you again to forgive and forget my rudeness of yesterday. So speak. You are an insider.

NISHAN

I said yesterday she seemed to have no joy in her work. I don't mean to hurt your feelings, but she seems that way today, too.

SHAKEH

Cousin, Aznive loves working in the house. Believe me when I say that.

ANOUSH

Oh yes sister I would say that too. I have seen her at other times and she works with joy.

NISHAN

That is my meaning then. With me here she is cold. Perhaps she doesn't like me.

ARMEN

How could she dislike you when she doesn't know you?

NISHAN

Perhaps she is interested in another man.

ARMEN

I say there is no one else.

VARTAN

Things in this country can't be exactly like things in the old country. The women there were grateful to be married. They are wiser in this country.

ARMEN

It is true Nishan. I hate to say this, but they are wiser because they meet outsiders and it makes their heads turn. They leave aside their true traditions. They become corrupted with ideas of cheap romances.

SHAKEH

That is not always true.

ARMEN

Woman don't get involved in these things.

SHAKEH

Is it so wrong to fall in love before marriage? Is it wrong because we found our love after marriage?

ARMEN

Woman, traditions are greater things than love.

SHAKEH

We are not in the old country anymore. We are here and when we came here we knew we had to break old traditions and make new ones. Is love with marriage such a foul, base thing?

ARMEN

There is love with marriage among us too. But when there is no first love there must still be marriage among us only.

SHAKEH

We are all kinds together in this country. We should know and understand and live

with all our neighbors.

ARMEN

Are we dogs woman? What are you saying before these people to shame me?

VARTAN

Calm yourself Armen. She is saying an idea.

ARMEN

She is tearing down what I am trying to build. I have brought you and Nishan here in honor and she is shaming my house. Shut your mouth woman.

ANOUSH

Enough brother. She said nothing.

ARMEN

Nothing! I'll tell you what she is saying. There is an outsider interested in our girl. All right, Nishan I said there was no one, but now I tell you the truth. It isn't my fault. I don't know how she met him. But the whole thing is against everything I stand for and my daughter knows it. And my wife knows it too. But the two of them brought the young man here and my wife, I can see now, was overcome by his smooth talking and flattery.

SHAKEH

I spoke to him only for my daughter. Only for her happiness!

ARMEN

How dare you woman! My word is happiness in this house. Now I tell you silence!

(He slaps her. Shakeh falls back into her chair. She covers her face as she weeps hysterically. Anoush throws her arms around her and is comforting her. Aznive rushes in and falls to her knees at her mother's side.)

AZNIVE

Momma? Momma what is it?

(Aznive gets no response from her mother who continues crying. She looks at Anoush who says nothing. She looks at her Father. She understands that he has hit

her. The ringing of the doorbell breaks the silence.)

Poppa what happened?

ARMEN

The door bell rang. Answer it.

AZNIVE

Why did you hit her?

(The bell rings again.)

ARMEN

Answer the door, I said.

(Aznive rises.)

ARMEN

(To the men)

I am sorry for this display my friends.

Cousin Nishan I am not a rich man but I have more than enough. I will make up all these things to you. My wife's loose tongue and my daughter's disobedience.

NISHAN

We can talk again some other time.

CUT TO:

Aznive at the door. She opens it and there stands Bill.)

VARTAN (OVER)

Oh we will; we will. When this business of the outsider dies down all will be well again.

(Aznive is terrified. Bill pushes in a little.)

BILL

I've got to see you Aznive.

AZNIVE

Not now, Bill. Please go away now.

BILL

Aznive it's got to be now. Aznive I love you and I want you to go away with me.

AZNIVE

Please Bill. Tomorrow, tomorrow!

ARMEN (OVER)

Aznive who is it?

AZNIVE

Bill there are people here.

BILL

I don't care who's here! All I want to know is if you still love me.

AZNIVE

Yes Bill. Yes. I love you. Now go, please.

ARMEN (OVER)

Aznive!!

CUT TO:

(Armen's face.)

CUT TO:

(Medium shot of Armen)

Who is it?!

(Suddenly he is angry.)

(BILL (OVER)

It's me. Mr. Mohigian.

DOLLY BACK:

(For whole shot. Bill has pushed Aznive back and strides slowly toward Armen.)

ARMEN

I told you Mr. Russell you are not welcome in my house.

BILL

I'm going in a minute. Aznive's going with me. My folks are going to keep an eye on her for the few days it'll take us to get married.

ARMEN

Have you no respect talking to me, her father, in this way. This man here is her suitor! Don't you know shame if you don't know respect?

BILL

No I don't. If he cared anything he'd be trying to stop me.

CUT TO:

(Close up of Nishan's puzzled face)

BILL (Over)

Get your coat, Aznive!

(Aznive is transfixed.)

CUT TO:

(Whole scene)

ARMEN

Go upstairs, Aznive.

(Aznive stands motionless.)

ARMEN

Aznive, I order you to go upstairs.

SHAKEH (OVER)

Get your coat Aznive.

CUT TO:

(Close up of Shakeh's eyes swollen, hair dishevelled.)

Get your coat and go with my blessing.

CUT TO:

(Whole scene, include Shakeh)

ARMEN

Woman I made you shut your mouth once. I'll do it again. Are you trying to lower us in the eyes of our guests, in the eyes of our community?!"

SHAKEH

You have already done that. Yesterday your daughter was a gem before these people. Today you have made her dirt. You've made her an unfit home keeper. You've even made her look like a loose woman. And you've offered money to get her married. You have lowered us to our world. She doesn't need to live in our world anymore. Bill take her. Get her coat and take her. *(Bill goes to the closet and extracts Aznive's coat. Shakeh embraces her daughter. Bill comes behind Aznive and puts the coat over her shoulders.)*

SHAKEH

Go with my blessing my children.

(Shakeh kisses Bill and then Aznive.)

AZNIVE

Poppa give us your blessing.

ARMEN

You get no blessing from me.

CUT TO:

(Close up of Aznive's tortured face.)

AZNIVE

Please Poppa give me your blessing.

CUT TO:

(Armen's face)

ARMEN

My friends, I am tired. I am suddenly old. Please excuse me and let me go upstairs. One thing I ask you when you tell this story in other places—and you will, it is all right—tell our countrymen I held to the traditions and did not bless my daughter. Tell them in my family line

there was only left this thankless girl. And tell them I was the last of the Mohigians.

(There is silence.)

SHAKEH

Bless her Armen.

ARMEN

Leave me alone.

(He strides slowly to the stairs.)

SHAKEH

Armen, our friends will have more to tell unless you bless Aznive.

VARTAN

Enough of this, all of you. Shakeh, Armen, we will leave now. And please think well of us. Our tongues are not so loose.

SHAKEH

Armen, I will leave this house unless you bless our daughter.

VARTAN

Shakeh, sister, time will heal all things. Leave off now.

SHAKEH

I will break all ties, all tradition. I will divorce you. I will go with my daughter.

ARMEN

Gol Gol

NISHAN

Cousin Armen. Don't take these things too far.

ARMEN

Let her go. She has destroyed the new generation. Let her destroy the old.

(Shakeh has taken up her coat. There are tears in Armen's eyes.)

ANOUSH

Shakeh, sister, leave off now. Everything will be all right soon.

SHAKEH

Someone has to be a bridge for Aznive. I will not let her tear herself apart between old ways and new ways. If he will not change I will go.

AZNIVE

Momma stay. I'll be all right. I have Bill. *(Shakeh, coat on, heads for the door.)*

ARMEN

(Roaring)

Shakeh!!

(She turns.)

ARMEN

Shakeh don't go!!! Don't smash our world.

SHAKEH

There is no more our world and their world!! There is life! And in it there must be room for love!!

ARMEN

Then don't go Shakeh!! Don't go because love has grown between us.

SHAKEH

And that love was our girl. And she is leaving as though she was never born of us!!

ARMEN

No. She was born of us. Shakeh she was

and I say it now. Come here Aznive. Bring Bill. Come Bill.

(Aznive and Bill approach Armen. He puts a hand on each of their heads.)

ARMEN

Go with my blessing my daughter. Go with my blessing my son.

(Aznive kisses her father. She and Bill exit. Nishan, Anoush and Vartan take their coats and pass Shakeh at the door. Anoush grasps Shakeh's hand to show her friend she understands. Anoush kisses Shakeh's cheek. Armen and Shakeh are alone. Shakeh crosses to Armen. They clasp each other, cheek to cheek with tears in their eyes.)

FADE OUT:

END

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC. REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912

OF ARMENIAN REVIEW

Boston, Massachusetts, October 1, 1959

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid personally appeared Mugurditch Der Avedisian, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the BUSINESS MANAGER of the ARMENIAN REVIEW and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in section 411 Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are:

<i>Publisher</i> —Hairenik Association, Inc.	212 Stuart Street, Boston, Mass.
<i>Editor</i> —Ruben Darbinian	212 Stuart Street, Boston, Mass.
<i>Managing Editor</i> —Ruben Darbinian	212 Stuart Street, Boston, Mass.
<i>Business Manager</i> —Mugurditch Der Avedisian	212 Stuart Street, Boston, Mass.

2. That the owner is:
Hairenik Association, Inc.

Pres.—John Der Hovanesian

Sec.—Arsen Terlemezian

Treas.—Beglar Navassardian

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (None).

This corporation has no stockholders or bondholders.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

Business Manager — MUGURDITCH DER AVEDISIAN

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 30th day of September 1959.

SARKIS CHUTCHIAN

(Notary Public)

Seal

(My commission expires Sept. 24, 1966)

